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

Number 36, September 2004

(formerly published as *Public Libraries & Social Exclusion Action Planning Network Newsletter*, issue 1, May 1999 – issue 29, September 2001)

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.

Two new JISCMAIL Lists

Over the summer, we have set up two more discussion/information-sharing lists for any library, museum or archives staff working with:

- Refugees and Asylum-seekers – www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/REFUGEES
- Travellers – www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/TRAVELLERS

Did you see ...?

ExtraTime

The latest issue[1] of *ExtraTime* has a very useful introduction to the concept of "personalised learning" (pp6-9) which, by implication, is likely to have a major effect on school and public libraries, and a feature on out-of-school-hours learning in Wales, particularly focusing on community provision in Rhondda Cynon Taf (pp12-13).

Your life is a journey

During April and May 2004, children at Hazelbury School in Enfield worked on a project with Enfield Library Service (funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation) using storytelling and visual arts to explore the theme of "Journeys". This was another part of the cross-London "Welcome to Your Library" project.

---

[1] *ExtraTime* 33 Autumn 2004. *ExtraTime* is published by ContinYou – further information at: www.continyou.org.uk.

Many of the children had been on long journeys to reach Enfield, and the project particularly raised awareness and understanding of Roma culture, as the Roma community is one of the most marginalised in Enfield.

A book[2] has just been published, which gives a vivid taste of the project, containing pictures of the children's art-work, maps (which were real or imaginary) and stories ("Memories"), and there is also a toolkit[3] for teachers to use to develop a project of their own.

Copies of the book and toolkit are available from Hilary Plews (hilary.plews@enfield.gov.uk).

Breaking the cycle …

The SEU has just published this major series of reports. So far, I have seen only the main report[4], which I am assessing here, but information on the others will follow.

This report takes stock after seven years of work by the SEU. Based on new research and analysis, it outlines:

- Progress to date
- Challenges that remain
- Lessons learned
- 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) …

---

[2] *Your life is a journey*. Enfield Libraries, 2004.
[3] *Your life is a journey: toolkit* Enfield Libraries, 2004.
[4] *Breaking the cycle: taking stock of progress and priorities for the future – a report by the Social Exclusion Unit*. ODPM, 2004, £15.00 (ISBN: 1-85112-724-0).

- 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. As you will have seen in the media recently, key beneficiaries include children and young people; rough sleepers; 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 identified five key problems that continue to drive social exclusion – and which are holding back progress:

- 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.

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.

Annex A lists key new policies introduced since 1997 and policies in the pipeline to tackle social exclusion, and Annex B lists Floor and PSA Targets.

This is a very useful assessment of progress to date and a valuable pointer to future developments – we need to ensure that we have built these into our own future plans.

I will write about the documents that were published as the rest of the "Breaking the cycle" series in a future newsletter.

Community Access to Archives Project [CAAP]

The National Archives is leading a new project, CAAP, which aims to provide a framework for the development of relationships and activities with community groups by creating a 'Best Practice Model' (drawing on the experience of Hackney Archives Department and West Yorkshire Archive Service, with input from advisory partners

The National Archives of Scotland, the National Council on Archives, the National Library of Wales, the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, and Commanet).

The 'Best Practice Model' will be available from October 2004.

Further information is available at: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives/caap; email: caap@nationalarchives.gov.uk; or from Frieda Midgley, Project Manager, tel: 020 8392 5330 x 2051.

Londoners need to read

In July, ALM London launched their report[5] on the current and potential role of libraries, museums and archives in supporting adults with basic skills needs.

The key findings include:

1. There is strong evidence that libraries and museums are already providing learning opportunities for adults with basic skills needs
2. Libraries are successful at widening adult participation in learning
3. Libraries, museums and archives have the potential to significantly strengthen progression
4. Learners see a "natural synergy" between the three domains
5. Libraries and museums are involved in local learning partnerships with mainstream providers, which secure funding to develop their services for adults with basic skills needs.

At the launch, as well as hearing from the authors of the report, David Brockhurst and Ian Dodds, Graham Fisher (CE, ALM London) outlined the next steps for this project:

- to develop an evidence-based strategy
- to develop work with the Basic Skills Agency
- to set up a Strategic Policy Advisory Group (including the LSC, Government Office for London, LDA, representatives from libraries, museums and archives)
- to ensure that the report is taken forward through action.

Jonathan Douglas (Head of Learning and Access, MLA) talked about the "Need to Read" initiative, and particularly emphasised the role of the Regions:

- developing partnerships
- creating advocacy
- developing initiatives to test boundaries and to pilot new ideas
- staff awareness-raising
- developing project monitoring, support and evaluation
- disseminating information.

Jonathan felt that this work had impacts on:

---

[5] David Brockhurst and Ian Dodds. *Londoners need to read: research into the current and potential role of libraries, museums and archives in supporting learning for adults with basic skills needs.* ALM London, 2004.

- Staff
  - raising skills
  - raising commitment which led to delivery
  - capacity-building
  - gave a real partnership to embed in

- Learners
  - libraries, museums and archives as "third spaces"
  - resources available
  - sessions enjoyable

- Basic Skills providers
  - better access to resources
  - more demand

- DfES and LSCs.

Further information from the ALM London Website, www.almlondon.org.uk.

Link age

DWP have just published a report[6], looking at the partnership-building that is required to meet the needs (including information needs) of elderly people.

Ageing and the countryside ...

Age Concern England have just produced the report[7] of a Conference (organised by a range of agencies) held in March, which looked at the needs of older people living in the countryside.

"The Leicester Study Series for Professional Development"

The University of Leicester's Department of Museum Studies has launched a series of resource packs for people working in museums to increase or update their knowledge and skills.

The pack on "Social Inclusion" includes a study guide[8] (which looks at definitions; social exclusion in a museum context; museums as agents of social inclusion;

---

[6] *Link age: building partnerships.* DWP, 2004. Available at: www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/dwp/2004/linkage/link_age.pdf.
[7] *Ageing @ the Countryside: Conference report 16 March 2004.* Age Concern Reports, 2004. (ISBN: 1-903629-25-X). Available at: www.defra.gov.uk/rural/pdfs/research/ageing_conference.pdf.
[8] Richard Sandell <u>and</u> Victoria Mills. *Social inclusion.* University of Leicester Department of Museum Studies ("The Leicester Study Series for Professional Development"), 2004.

inclusive working; other viewpoints; case studies; bibliography) and a copy of *Museums, society, inequality*[9].

The pack costs £80.00, and further information is available at: www.le.ac.uk/museumstudies [click on 'professional development']. Enquiries to: Barbara Lloyd, tel: 0116 252 3962; email: bl5@le.ac.uk.

"Why remember?"

"Why remember? Libraries and Reminiscence" is the title of the Access Network's next seminar, to be held on Tuesday 9 November 2004 at Newcastle Central Library.

This will be a "day to focus attention on a number of exciting projects which are happening in public libraries and elsewhere, which will hopefully stimulate you to try new ideas."

Further details from: Maureen King, Derby City Libraries, Roman House, Friar Gate, Derby DE1 1XB
Tel: 01332 716605
Email: maureen.king@derby.gov.uk

"Family Learning in Today's Libraries ..."

The CILIP Branch and Mobile Group Weekend School is taking place in Edinburgh, 12-14 November 2004.

The School includes sessions on:

- Bookstart
- Projects (including the "Big Book Share" and Essex Libraries' Mobile Libraries Travellers Project)
- "Stories from the Web" and Centre for the Child
- "Right to Read"

as well as a range of other speakers.

Further information from: Julia Shepherd
Tel: 01296 383134; Fax: 01296 382259; Email: jshepherd@buckscc.gov.uk.

Rural Strategy 2004

Defra have just published the latest *Rural Strategy*[10]. It stresses the need for access to public services, and, in its section on tackling social exclusion, says that the strategy is "to target our efforts at socially excluded groups and empower them to improve their lives and communities."

---

[9] Richard Sandell (editor) *Museums, society, inequality*. Routledge ("Museum Meanings" series), 2002 (ISBN (pbk): 0-415-26060-4)
[10] *The Rural Strategy 2004*. Defra, 2004. Available at: www.defra.gov.uk/rural/strategy.

In addition, they intend to:

> "investigate how well voluntary and community organisations can target those who are experiencing social exclusion and how they should best be supported. This means understanding the best ways to sustain the viability of their community, for example ... bringing services together under one roof or initiating local regeneration initiatives."

Emel

Simon Wallace (Southend Libraries) has emailed me to say that they have started subscribing to *Emel*, a new, UK-based, Muslim lifestyle magazine which is proving very popular.

Further details from: www.emelmagazine.com.

Activities to tackle social exclusion in Newham

Adrian Whittle and Jacky Appleton have written to outline some of the work they are currently doing. This includes (amongst other work, such as the extension to the "Welcome to Your Library" project and working with Sure Start):

- Positive Action for Young People [PAYP] funded extra hours during the summer at two libraries, with x-box and PS2 games, extra comics and magazines, board games, playing music
- PAYP-funded games at East Ham from September
- PAYP-funded Morning Club at The Gate from September, with 20 places, including 8 reserved for PAYP referrals; the young people will receive breakfast, get study support, and, when the club closes at 8.45am, the referred children will be walked to school by the workers
- ESOL classes at two libraries
- ICT training sessions for over-50s at each library through the year
- Tamil and Urdu reading groups commencing in September and October, funded by NRF
- teenage reading group at Beckton, with two more starting in August
- over-50s session at Beckton each week, with reading promotions, music, talks and social activities
- extra lending allowance for home-educated children
- ICT training for unaccompanied minors at East Ham.
- The Summer Reading Scheme was extended to provide reading helpers twice a week in each library (publicised via refugee groups and other excluded groups).

Access to services with interpreters

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has just published a piece of research[11], looking at users' views of gaining access to service with interpreters.

There are some valuable reminders for those of us who call upon interpreters, and the study also found that people who need professional interpreters would benefit from being provided with more information about how to access their services – a role for us there?

"Hear by Right"

"Hear by Right" is a set of standards, developed by the National Youth Agency in conjunction with the LGA, for organisations to use to assess and improve their practice and policy on the active involvement of children and young people.

There are seven standards[12], based on the Seven S model of organisational change: Shared values, Strategy, Structures, Systems, Staff, Skills and knowledge, and Style of leadership; and the standards also help you decide where you are on the "ladder of participation" (from manipulation to child-initiated shared decisions with adults). (Anyone who has experience of using the Quality in Study Support standards for assessing services will find the format familiar!)

In addition, there is a helpful "Listing"[13] which accompanies the standards, which includes the policy context for involving young people, useful contacts and Websites, and a list of other resources – and there is also a briefing document for adults working with young people[14].

Further information is available from the National Youth Agency, 17-23 Albion Street, Leicester LE1 6GD.
Tel: 0116 285 3700
Email: nya@nya.org.uk
Website: www.nya.org.uk.

"Futurebuilders"

"Futurebuilders"[15] is a new £125 million fund, launched in May 2004. Its vision is "to improve public service delivery through long-term investment in the voluntary and community sector in England", and its objectives include to:

- develop an investment culture in the voluntary sector

---

[11] Claire Alexander *et al. Access to services with interpreters: users' views*. JRF, 2004 £14.95 (ISBN: 1-85935-228-6). Available as a downloadable pdf (1.75Mb) at: www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/934.asp.

[12] Harry Wade and Bill Badham. *Hear by right: standards for the active involvement of children and young people*. National Youth Agency and Local Government Association, nd [2001], £8.99 (ISBN: 0-86155-300-4). Booklet + CD-ROM.

[13] *Involving children and young people – where to find out more*. National Youth Agency, 2003. £2.00.

[14] *Involving children and young people in decision-making*. National Youth Agency, 2003. £0.50.

[15] Thanks to David Owen, Executive Director, Share the Vision, for this information.

- reduce dependency on short-term grants
- generate more income via increased risk taking
- share learning and lever in funds from other sources via investment in exemplar projects.

The plan is to invest the fund via two "windows of application" periods:

- 5 July – 31 October 2004 (c35% of fund)
- March – July 2005 (c60% of fund)

All funded projects will have to meet the Shared Priorities (ie will have to relate to community cohesion; tackling crime; education and learning; health and social care; support for children and young people), and there are useful background papers also available on the Website.

The intention is to focus "Futurebuilders" on "those services where either the private sector has shown little interest or where the public sector has had difficulty in delivering effective services, but where the voluntary and community sector has the potential to bring added value."

"Eligibility Criteria and Guidance" were published on 5 July.

For further information, www.futurebuilders-england.org.uk/

Mental Health

The National Institute for Mental Health in England has recently published its draft anti-stigma plan[16] for consultation. Further information on their work can be found at: http://nimhe.org.uk/antistigma/.

"A book isn't finished until it's read"

I attended the CILIP Youth Libraries Group Conference for the day on 18 September, and heard three excellent presentations which I will attempt to summarise here!

Jonathan Douglas (Head of Learning and Access, MLA) spoke on the "Framework for the Future" national offers. He started by outlining our challenge as being how to become relevant to policy development, culture, communities, the individual.

In terms of policy, the key issues currently are:

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

---

[16] *Proposed priorities to tackle stigma and discrimination on mental health grounds, 2004-2007*. NIMHE, 2004.

The key cultural drivers are:

- A multi-literate society (by which Jonathan meant written, visual, emotional, etc)
- Diversity
- Choice
- Personalisation
- Individualisation, rather than communities
- Value is a monetary concept.

He felt that reading had an answer to some of these issues :

- You can identify yourself in stories
- Stories celebrate diversity
- Learning all the time
- Cross-fertilisation of the different literacies
- The reader is in charge
- Reading brings people together (and Jonathan saw "reading as community cohesion")

We are being shaped at the moment by:

- Sure Start and the setting up of Children's Centres
- *Every child matters*
- Cultural entitlement
- The forthcoming Youth Green Paper
- "Learning to Listen"
- DfES 5-year strategy for education.

In terms of *Every child matters*, the following are being developed:

- Ways of supporting parents and carers
- Early intervention and effective prevention
- Accountability and integration
- Workforce reform – development of generic skills for people working with children: how should we address this? And, in the restructuring of children's services in local authorities, where will libraries [and other services for children] sit?
- Setting of key outcomes.

With regard to cultural entitlement, Jonathan thought that we needed to reassess our relationship with Cultural Partnerships (which had not been a very successful one for libraries so far), and that, to use 'policy-speak', we need to be looking at developing "progressive universalism". There are successful models of looking at cultural entitlement (eg Oxfordshire, Gateshead), and there is a joint DCMS/DfES bid to the Spending Review 2004 for funds to take this work forwards. A major question for all of us is – how can we offer tailored, individualised, local services in huge local authorities?

Jonathan then looked at what schools were likely to be like by 2008. There will be:

- Personalisation of learning
- A continuing push on literacy skills, especially at Key Stage 2
- Extended schools (and where will this leave public libraries' study support provision?)
- A key development role for Children's Trusts
- 3-year funding cycles for schools
- Clusters of schools empowered to commission activities.

The Library agenda for change is coming from *Framework for the future*, the new professional qualifications framework, and the revision of the Library Standards.

In response to *Framework*, MLA has developed:

- Advocacy
- Marketing
- Workforce development
- New approaches to partnerships

and is also, in relation to reading and learning, building on 5 national delivery priorities:

- Early Years
- Out-of-school-hours learning
- Engaging teenagers
- Adult learners
- Creating reading experiences for adults

in addition to other already-existing national offers, eg:

- People's Network
- Access for disabled people
- Library management peer reviews.

Mel Gibson (Senior Lecturer, University of Sunderland, and Literacy Consultant) then asked "How did we get here from there – why are we so hung up about children's reading?"

Starting from the point that there are very different constructions of childhood (children as 'little devils' or as 'sweet innocents', for example), Mel argued that we live in a culture that is uncomfortable about children and children's reading. The current popularity of "cross-over" books may mark a sea-change, but there is still a "high/low binary" view of children's books (often seen as exemplars of 'dumbing down').

There is a huge issue around social control of children – child protection has led to adults controlling children's culture (from the days on replacing "penny dreadfuls" with comics onwards).

Not only has there been a tension between protection and enlightenment (for example the current furore about girls' comics – isn't there a continuing theme of protecting girls from whom they want to be?), but there have also been issues

around elitism versus popular culture (viz. all the work by critics such as F R Leavis) – popular culture has been described as a "rash" and a "disease"!

Added to this are strong views relating to nostalgia (eg Richard Hoggart's views of the 1930s as opposed to the 1950s), gender, and class.

Our challenge is – where do we fit into all this?

Finally, **Anne Harding** (Independent Trainer and Lecturer) talked about "Children's reading choices: how and why children read what they do and how librarians support them".

Using many quotations from young people themselves, Anne showed the power that reading can have for young people, but also looked at some of the key issues, including:

- Generally, in the UK, we start children on formal literacy too early
- There are major impacts of class and being socially excluded on children's literacy
- There are different approaches to reading by boys (tend to want to find out, like shared reading) and girls (like the narrative of the stories)
- The Literacy Hour introduces children to extracts from books – unimaginative teachers may never introduce whole books
- Series fiction is really valuable for encouraging reading
- Nonfiction is valuable in its own right, of course, but some children may use it to hide the fact that they are poor readers
- Importance of books with pictures for children and young people at all reading levels.

Anne stressed that there is a large amount of valuable work being developed, but this must be mainstreamed if it is to have any real, long-term effect.

Bright young things ...

Also at the Conference, the latest YLG publication[17] was launched; subtitled "Libraries inspiring children's learning", it includes sections on:

- "Unlocking learning for all: how libraries can help"
- Information literacy
- Learning in a library homework centre [Enfield]
- Wakefield Libraries' involvement with the University of the First Age
- Kirklees Education Library Service's "books**plus**" service
- E-learning
- "Big Book Share" at HMP Nottingham
- Essex Libraries' "Schoolstart" scheme
- Working with Travellers in Swaffham Library, Norfolk

---

[17]Sarah Mears (editor) *Bright young things: libraries inspiring children's learning.* YLG, 2004. (ISBN: 094658124X). £5.00 for CILIP members, £6.00 for non-members. Further information from: Marilyn Brocklehurst, The Norfolk Children's Book Centre, Alby, Norfolk NR11 7HB. Tel: 01263 761402; Fax: 01263 768167; Email: marilyn@nbc.co.uk.

- Using *Ispiring learning for all* to evaluate the impact of the Summer Reading Challenge 2003
- Using *Inspiring learning for all* to develop lifelong learning services for children and families in Warwickshire

---

New resources from The Reading Agency

The new Reading Agency reading resources brochure is available from 1 October. It features:

Reading Promotions for Adults

- *Got kids? Get reading,* a family reading promotion for adults with reading ages 9-14 years, who have children aged 0-7 years
- *First Choice*, reading resource for adults with a reading age of 9-14 years.

Reading Promotions for Young People

- *BOOX 10*
- *Manga Mania*, a reading promotion for young people aged 13-16
- *txt*, a promotion of high-interest, low reading level material for young people with a reading age 6-12 years.

Further information from Alison Shakspeare, tel: 0871 750 1207; email: alison.shakspeare@readingagency.org.uk.

Connections: Hidden British Histories"

The "Connections" Exhibition is part of a project documenting Britain's 'hidden history' of Asian, Black and Jewish people's experiences of settling in the UK. The Exhibition will be at:

City Hall, London SE1
1-29 October 2004

The Jewish Museum, The Sternberg Centre, 80 East End Road, London N3
1 November 2004 – 30 January 2005

The Ragged School Museum, 46-50 Copperfield Road, London E3
16 February – 7 July 2005

The Exhibition will be available for hire to schools in Greater London from September 2005 – July 2006, and to schools outside London from September 2006 – July 2007.

Further information from: info@connections-exhibition.org.

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:

John Vincent
Wisteria Cottage
Nadderwater
Exeter EX4 2JQ

Tel/fax: 0845 128 4897
E-mail: john@nadder.org.uk

September 2004