

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

Number 37, October 2004

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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>.

Chair of The Network

I am delighted to announce that Janet Holden from Norfolk Library Service has been nominated and has agreed to become Chair of The Network.

Community Access to Archives Project [CAAP] – Correction

The Web address for CAAP has changed¹ to:
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/partnerprojects/caap.

Did you see ...?

Literacy Today

The latest issue² of *Literacy Today* has a number of articles of particular interest to us, including:

- Liz Attenborough “Big plans for small talk” (p7), a round-up of recent developments in the “Talk to Your Baby” campaign
- Amelia Foster “The story of a reader” (p10), an outline of the NLT’s “Reading Connects” initiative
- Viv Bird “Social inclusion: the policy challenge” (p14) which summarises the half-stage progress with the National Literacy Trust’s three-year project, “Literacy and Social Inclusion” – key findings include the importance of family involvement and the strong role of arts, sports and ICT to motivate disaffected young people. The article also mentions the role that libraries play ...

¹Thanks to Catherine Taylor at Hackney Archives for this information.

² *Literacy Today* 40, Sept 2004.

- Sheila Wolfendale and Trevor Bryans “Looking after literacy in public care” (p22), a report on the Kent “Looking after Literacy” project.

The Medical Foundation

The latest issue of *Adults Learning* includes an article³ outlining the work of The Medical Foundation, the London-based organisation that supports survivors of torture (including refugees and asylum-seekers), and also has a brief note about a new £4m European project, “Progress-GB”, led by NIACE, which aims to pilot and develop new approaches to helping refugees and migrant workers make progress in the workplace.

“The State of Our Towns and Cities” [SOCR]

The ODPM has just announced that the contract to carry out the SOCR research project has been awarded, with a full report due next year⁴.

The SOCR will cover four main themes:

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

and will provide:

- 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 project team will undertake 12 case studies in: London, Manchester and Birmingham; and Bristol, Burnley, Cambridge, Derby, Leicester, Leeds, Medway Towns, Sheffield and Sunderland.

The future of local government ...

The ODPM have also just produced a document⁵ setting out the Government’s 10-year vision for local government.

The key challenges include:

³ Paul Stanistreet “The most important tool you can have in your work is wanting to understand”, *Adults Learning* 16 (2) October 2004, pp9-11.

⁴ Further information is available on the ODPM Website at: www.odpm.gov.uk.

⁵ *The future of local government: developing a 10-year vision*. ODPM, 2004. Available to download as a pdf (207k) at: www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_localgov/documents/page/odpm_locgov_029983.hspx.

- Establishing a more coherent and stable relationship between local and central government
 - Clarifying accountabilities and responsibilities at each level for the delivery of services
 - Improving local community leadership
 - Increasing levels of citizen engagement
 - Securing improvements in public services
 - Ensuring that the finance system is fair and fit for purpose.
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“Children’s Centres – a guide for librarians”

Just in case you haven’t come across this yet, the Early Years Library Network has a very useful Website which includes an outline of the role and workings of the new Children’s Centres, with some examples of different models⁶.

“Bookmark”

I hadn’t come across this before – and should have done! Run by Booktrust, this site contains a vast range of information about children’s books and disability – www.booksfordisability.org.uk.

Public Library Service Standards

Just in case you’ve missed this too, DCMS have issued the first part of the new, revised Standards⁷. This part is “a suite of targets that measure performance across core activities” [Introduction], and the second part will consist of impact measures, once they have been developed.

Nowhere to turn

The CAB has recently produced a report⁸ highlighting the plight of migrant workers in Britain (they talk about a “modern-day slave trade”), and calling for the creation of a single body, a Fair Employment Commission, to enforce fair employment practices⁹.

Equality in the workplace

The DTI is funding an awareness drive on equality in the workplace, and have produced some useful resources, including:

⁶ www.cilip.org.uk/eyln/news/news5.html.

⁷ Available at: www.culture.gov.uk/libraries_and_communities/library_standards.htm.

⁸ *Nowhere to turn*. Citizens Advice, 2004. Available to download as a pdf (118k) at: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/index/campaigns/social_policy/evidence_reports/er_employment/nowhere-to-turn.htm.

⁹ Thanks to LGIU’s *Roundup* [the LGIU’s briefing for Trade Unionists] 24, September 2004 for this information.

- *Protection against discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation in employment and vocational training* (DTI, 2003), a two-page flyer with basic information
- *Equal Opportunities is your business too* (CRE/DTI, 2004), a short booklet on good practice in equality and diversity for small businesses
- *Equal Opportunities in Scotland is your business too* (CRE/DTI, 2004)
- *Equal Opportunities in Wales is your business too* (CRE/DTI, 2004)
- A link to www.equalityni.org/ for developments in Northern Ireland.

All this material and other information is available at: www.dti.gov.uk/er/equality.¹⁰

Mind the gap

In September, Leonard Cheshire's Policy and Campaigns Team launched a report¹¹ that outlines the social and emotional costs to disabled people of an inaccessible transport network.

Findings include:

- 23% of respondents that had sought employment during the last 12 months turned down a job offer because of inaccessible transport.
- 18% of respondents missed a medical appointment during the preceding two years because of difficulties caused by inaccessible transport.
- 25% of respondents do not see their family and friends as often as they'd like because they are restricted by inaccessible transport.

Leonard Cheshire's campaign is urging the government to introduce measures that will deliver an accessible transport network within five to 10 years, and put an end to one of the lasting barriers to disabled people's inclusion in society.

“Multiverse”

www.multiverse.ac.uk/ is an Initial Teacher Training Professional Resource Network, exploring issues of diversity and achievement¹². Although aimed at trainee teachers and their educators, it has some extremely useful brief introductions to key topics under the following themes:

- Race and ethnicity
- Social class

¹⁰ Thanks to *Advantage* [the Cooperative Bank's magazine], October 2004.

¹¹ *Mind the gap*. Leonard Cheshire, 2004. Available from: the Information Resources Officer, Leonard Cheshire, 30 Millbank, London SW1P 4QD. Tel: 020 7802 8231; Email: info@london.leonard-cheshire.org.uk. Also available to download from: www.leonard-cheshire.org.

¹² Thanks to Helen Carpenter for alerting me to this.

- Religious diversity
- Bilingual and multilingual learners
- Refugees and asylum-seekers
- Travellers and Roma.

It also includes selections of books and articles for further reading, and, in the Travellers section, reviews a new title which looks of interest: Chris Derrington and Sally Kendall *Gypsy Traveller children in secondary schools*. Trentham Books, 2004 (ISBN: 1-85856-320-8).

Inclusion Website

Just in case you do not know this, the National Grid for Learning [NGfL] has an “Inclusion” Website, which acts as a portal to all sorts of valuable resources, for example on the needs of refugee and Traveller children.

The Website is: <http://inclusion.ngfl.gov.uk/>

NRDC

The National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy is the national centre dedicated to research and development on adult literacy, language and numeracy. It was established as part of *Skills for Life*, the national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills. The Centre aims to improve practice and inform policy through the generation of knowledge, by creating a strong research culture and by developing professional practice.

Their Website¹³ contains a range of resources that will of use to those of you working in the basic/essential skills area.

They have recently published a set of five case studies¹⁴ (including provision for refugees) which may give ideas for developing services, and they also provide information on ICT and adult literacy, teaching and a range of other topics.

Reaching the hardest to reach

This is the result of a survey by the Prince’s Trust of over 900 14-25 year-olds who were recognised as disadvantaged – it included young people who were unemployed, educational underachievers, ex-offenders and serving prisoners, and those in or leaving care aged 16-21¹⁵.

It paints a grim picture. For example:

- There are more than 1 million young people who are not in employment, education or training

¹³ www.nrdc.org.uk.

¹⁴ Celia Roberts *et al.* *English for speakers of other languages [ESOL] – case studies of provision, learners’ needs and resources*. NRDC, 2004.

¹⁵ *Reaching the hardest to reach*. The Prince’s Trust, 2004, £20.00 (ISBN: 1-902243-07-2). Available online at: www.princes-trust.org.uk.

- More than 5% of 15 year-olds leave school without any qualifications
- 92% of 14-25 year-olds believe that there are gaps in the provision of basic services in their local community – this lack of advice means that more than one in five socially excluded young people fail to turn to anyone for help and support
- 81% of disadvantaged young people liked the idea of a single organisation that can help with all their problems – yet, only 21% were happy with an office-hours service, and 52% preferred to have support available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

This is immensely useful background as we start to look at reaching the hardest-to-reach.

Fail to plan ...

NIACE have just published a toolkit¹⁶ for Black voluntary and community organisations, looking at how “the system” works in relation to:

- Preparing funding applications
- How to make Government policy work for you
- Sources of funding
- The role of infrastructure networks
- A list of useful organisations and resources.

As the blurb says, “the toolkit also gives insights for policy-makers, potential funding partners and stake-holders into the nature, experiences and expectations of black voluntary and community organisations.”

Stopping places

Gypsy-historian Simon Evans has written a new book, *Stopping places*¹⁷, with the intention of disentangling the recent history of the Gypsies and how they came to find themselves in the difficult situations so many of them are now in. He describes traditional life on the road in Kent and South London, governed by the round of seasonal agricultural work, until the mechanisation of farming began to reduce the need for casual labour. At the same time, the old stopping places were disappearing.

As the blurb says:

“The ultimate fate of many Gypsies today is to make the traumatic transition from a nomadic lifestyle to enforced settlement in houses. Reading the many first-hand accounts of Gypsies recorded by Simon Evans for the book, it is impossible not to sense the isolation and loss of identity which has accompanied this. And yet there is little sympathy for their plight among a

¹⁶ Lenford White. *Fail to plan: plan to fail – a toolkit for black voluntary and community organisations*. NIACE, 2004, £20.00 (ISBN: 1-86201-212-1). Further details from the NIACE Website at: www.niace.org.uk/publications.

¹⁷ Simon Evans. *Stopping places*. University of Hertfordshire Press, 2004, £14.99 (ISBN: 1-902806-30-1).

large proportion of the "settled" population, to whom the Gypsies are mistrusted and irredeemably Other. This book gives a moving account of a way of life under intense pressure from the majority culture and offers a more humane interpretation of the Gypsies' circumstances than they are frequently allowed."¹⁸

The needs of older people

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation have just produced two reports, looking at the needs of older people.

*Building a good life ...*¹⁹ looks at the sorts of support that communities ought to offer – and also explodes some of the myths about what older people may want!

*Older people shaping policy and practice*²⁰ pulls together the major research strand of JRF's work and summarises how older people should be more involved in developing policies and practice, rather than being seen as recipients of services. The Website²¹ also lists the other reports that form the background to this one – a very useful resource.

“Project Hero” toolkit

SEMLAC have just published a toolkit²² which has been drawn from the practice developed during the running of “Project Hero”. This project (run at HMP Reading and YOI) included two elements, “Superheroes” (which used graphic novels to generate discussion about role models and to invite an artistic response) and “Inside Voices” (which used museum objects as the inspiration for poetry).

The toolkit outlines how the project was developed, and then gives examples of some of the exercises used and the work created from them, plus a list of graphic novels and some examples of the museum objects used.

It would be very useful for anyone thinking of working in a prison/YOI setting, especially with young people who are turned off reading, libraries and museums.

Vital Link

The third Vital Link e-letter has just been published (October 2004). It includes information about their new series of regional events; the announcement of the

¹⁸ Thanks to John Pateman for alerting me to this.

¹⁹ Mary Godfrey *et al.* *Building a good life for older people in local communities: the experience of ageing in time and place*. JRF, 2004, £9.95 (ISBN: 1-85935-234-0). Available at: www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialcare/014.asp.

²⁰ Older People's Steering Group. *Older people shaping policy and practice*. JRF, 2004, £14.95 (ISBN: 1-85935-244-8). Available at: www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/foundations/044.asp.

²¹ www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/foundations/044.asp.

²² *Project Hero, incorporating “Superheroes” & “Inside Voices”*. SEMLAC, 2004. The toolkit will be downloadable from the SEMLAC Website, www.semlac.org.uk, and further information can be obtained from Joy McAlpine Black at SEMLAC, joym@semlac.org.uk.

launch of the “Essential First Choice” collection and the new “Got kids? Get reading!” promotion; news of another Vital Link training day; and much more!

If you would like to receive the e-letter, send your full contact details to alison.shakspeare@readingagency.org.uk.

Indicators of Sustainable Development

Defra have just published on their Website²³ a range of useful information, including the “UK Government Headline Indicators”, “UK Government 'Quality of Life Counts'” and “Regional Quality of Life Counts”, as well as links to Scottish and Welsh indicators, and to local indicators.

Under the “UK Government Headline Indicators”, there are measures of 'social progress', which includes poverty and social exclusion, education, health, housing and crime.

Our rights, our choices

The Disability Rights Commission, with the Centre for Education in Racial Equality in Scotland, has recently published a report²⁴ looking at issues of race and disability in relation to discrimination, based on responses to a questionnaire and feedback from three consultation events.

Key findings were:

- Many black and minority ethnic disabled people experience difficulty in obtaining information about services, including information about rights. This lack of information about rights and services can lead to some individuals experiencing isolation and exclusion.
- Black and minority ethnic disabled people and their families often do not know where to go to obtain information about rights. They are often unclear about what to expect by way of provision and are unclear about what is fair or unfair in the way they are treated.
- Some disability services and organisations have yet to develop an understanding of, or are unable to meet black and minority ethnic people’s needs whilst some services for black and minority ethnic people have yet to fully understand people’s disability or impairment related needs.

The full report is available from:

DRC Helpline, FREEPOST MID 02164, Stratford upon Avon CV37 9BR

Tel: 08457 622 633; fax: 08457 778 878; email: enquiry@drc-gb.org

It can also be downloaded from: www.drc-gb.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:

²³ www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/indicators/index.htm.

²⁴ *Our rights, our choices: meeting the information needs of black and minority ethnic disabled people – Laying the foundations for black and minority ethnic and disability organisations*. DRC, 2004.

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