

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 News

The Network's website has been selected to be archived by the UK Web Archiving Consortium (see: www.webarchive.org.uk).

Did you see ...?

'Peer Reviews'

Further to the brief report in the June newsletter¹, the latest issue of *CILIP Update*² lists "The emerging key themes for success" that have been identified through the six Reviews that have been completed so far. These themes are:

- "The ability of the service and its leaders to position the library service within the local authority, and the degree to which it is recognised as contributing to corporate objectives
- The rigour of performance management regimes
- Consideration of staff roles and responsibilities, and the extent to which these have changed or should change to be able to deliver new services, or work in new ways
- A clear direction and agenda for change, which is communicated."

TES Extra for Special Needs

Just in case you haven't seen this, the *Times Educational Supplement* issues *Extra* 10 times a year³, addressing special needs as a mainstream issue. The May issue, for example, includes pieces on:

¹ *The Network Newsletter* ... 45, June 2005, p7.

² *Update* 4 (6) June 2005, p3.

- The work of SENCOs
- Using drama with children with special needs
- The work of the National College for the Blind
- Children with spinal injury
- Transition from school to work
- Book reviews; information about courses and conferences, TV programmes, etc.

“Communities need Museums, Libraries and Archives: delivering through Local Area Agreements”

The last Newsletter⁴ included an update about the second round of LAAs (with a list of the 21 local authorities that have been agreed as pilots); a LAA is a three-year agreement that sets out the priorities for a local area, agreed between central government and a local area, represented by the local authority and Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and other key partners at local level. They are a new way of delivering local services – pooling funding streams to deliver cross-cutting outcomes, aligning targets across agencies and services, and seeking new ways of working that deliver under four blocks:

- Children and Young People's;
- Healthier Communities and Older People;
- Safer and Stronger Communities; and
- Economic Development and Enterprise.

MLA have just announced⁵ key involvement by the museums, archives and libraries sector. Regional Agencies are involved in supporting local authorities as they negotiate their LAAs with government – advocating the role of our sector, and sharing best practice and expertise. MLA is working with local government's Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) to develop web-based resources that provide advice and information for the sector, and the wider local government community, about how museums, libraries and archives can contribute to successful LAAs⁶.

SEMLAC Strategies

SEMLAC have just published their *Social inclusion strategy*⁷ which sets social inclusion within its national context (including outlining the key barriers – taken from *Libraries for all*); looks at the national challenge for museums, libraries and archives; outlines the main areas of social exclusion in the south-east and lists a few of the

³ *Extra* is available only by postal subscription (£50.00 for 10 issues). Further details from: TES Extra, Cary Court, Bancome Trading Estate, Somerton TA11 6TB; tel: 0870 4448628; fax: 01458 271146.

⁴ *The Network Newsletter*... 46, July 2005, pp14-15.

⁵ See: www.mla.gov.uk/news/snippets.asp?month=8&year=2005#840.

⁶ The full text of the MLA statement is available at: www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/aio/983051.

⁷ *Social inclusion strategy 2005-2007*. SEMLAC, 2005. Available to download as a pdf from: www.semlac.org.uk/socialinclusion_strategy.html.

MAL activities to tackle social exclusion in the south-east; and lists actions for SEMLAC, together with an Action Plan.

SEMLAC have also published their *Access and learning strategy*⁸ which looks particularly at how “Inspiring Learning for All” can be developed and applied regionally.

Ladder to learning and employment ...

NEMLAC have recently published⁹ the results of a research project (carried out by LISU) which collected examples of initiatives in the north-east, which demonstrated progress in learning or employment, and which show the sector’s contribution.

The main findings include:

- Museums, libraries and archives are successful in recruiting and re-engaging adult learners, and widening participation in learning
- They have the potential to significantly strengthen progression
- They are particularly successful with learners who find it difficult to engage with formal learning environments
- Many MLAs are involved in local learning partnerships with mainstream providers [taken from p4].

The report also includes brief case studies to give some ideas of the work that MLAs are involved in.

Laser Foundation report

The Laser Foundation has just published a major piece of work by PriceWaterhouseCoopers, *Libraries impact project*¹⁰.

The report clearly shows the contribution that libraries make to the Shared Priorities, and assists the development of an evidence-base at both local and national levels.

The impact measures that the report develops are:

Education

- The impact on adults (post-16) of library services supporting adult education by collection and analysis of:
 - Quantitative data showing the numbers (or %) covered
 - Qualitative data linked to, for example, the impact on confidence and qualifications or attainment

⁸ *Access and learning strategy 2005-2007*. SEMLAC, 2005. Available to download as a pdf from: www.semlac.org.uk/access_strategy.html.

⁹ Suzanne Lockyer and J Eric Davies. *Ladder to learning and employment*. NEMLAC, 2005. Further information from: www.nemlac.co.uk.

¹⁰ *Libraries impact project*. Laser Foundation, 2005. Available at: www.bl.uk/about/cooperation/laser-pubs.html.

- The impact of libraries on pupils attending summer reading schemes or homework clubs/study support based in libraries by collection and analysis of:
 - Quantitative data showing the number (or %) of participants
 - Qualitative data showing the impact on participants.

Children

- The impact of library activities supporting children and families (including, for example, Sure Start and family learning activities) by collection and analysis of:
 - Quantitative data showing the numbers (or %) covered by activities
 - Qualitative data showing the impact on participant literacy and confidence.

Health

- The impact of widening access to health information by collection and analysis of:
 - Quantitative data showing the number (or %) of adults accessing health information through libraries, through bookstock and ICT, supplemented by
 - Qualitative data (including support for well-being) gathered through survey information or interviews.

Older people

- The impact on older people of receiving library services in the home by collection and analysis of:
 - Quantitative data showing the number (or %) of older people receiving the service
 - Qualitative data gathered through survey information or interviews of users.
- The impact of libraries on older people accessing information on entitlements to benefits and services, including:
 - Quantitative data showing the number (or %) of older people accessing information
 - Qualitative data gathered through survey information or interviews.

The report then goes on to look in much more detail at methodologies for using these measures in libraries.

As Mark Hepworth (Director, Local Futures) says in the introduction:

“The research in this report – and its wider consideration of how libraries contribute to ‘social well being’ – supports the argument that in this day and age we should not look at libraries exclusively as free ‘book shops’, or ‘book

warehouses' or as promoters of 'book reading'. Books are not everything, and book-borrowing indicators should not be used as the prime measure of how libraries contribute to local and national priorities. This is a key message from the Laser Foundation report – more complex measures and methodologies are needed to properly capture the social benefits of library services ...

... Today we must look at the role of libraries in the context of the knowledge economy ... This is the exciting challenge facing the sector, a century and a half on from the opening of the first public library in London.” [p4]

Highly recommended.

Disability History Subject Specialist Network

Further to the piece in the July newsletter¹¹, the Disability History Subject Specialist Network has decided that it will be web-based, with downloadable reports and research, links to other sites, and discussion forums. They have also drafted a mission statement:

“To raise awareness and increase the understanding and development of the social and attitudinal history of disability by uncovering and developing museums, libraries and archive collections and facilitating research.”

A report is being submitted to MLA about the feasibility of developing the Network; further information from Tom Hodgson (Curator of Social History, Colchester Museums), tom.hodgson@colchester.gov.uk.

English Heritage Guidance Notes

Just in case you haven't seen these, English Heritage have a series of very useful Guidance Notes on their website¹²; intended as aids for organisations applying for funding, they are also good sources of information, contacts, etc – see, for example, *Researching the history of Black & Minority Ethnic communities in the UK*.¹³

Scottish Museums Council grants

In June 2005, the SMC launched its National Learning and Access Strategy for Museums and Galleries in Scotland.

The SMC is encouraging members to apply to the SMC small and large grants programmes for funding to support learning and access projects. Examples of areas which applications might address include:

- Lifelong learning

¹¹ *The Network Newsletter* ... 46, July 2005, pp2-3.

¹² www.hlf.org.uk/English/PublicationsAndInfo/AccessingPublications/GuidanceNotes.htm.

¹³ Thanks to Russell Luscombe for alerting me to these.

- Innovation in the delivery of learning in museums
- Physical and intellectual access to museums
- Access to museums by under-represented groups
- Better understanding of user needs
- Work with education, community and voluntary sector partners to ensure greater integration of services
- Integration of learning and access into service delivery
- Professional development for and involvement of museum staff and volunteers in learning and access work.

Further information from Helena Gillis (Learning & Access Adviser), tel: 0131 476 8591; email: helenag@scottishmuseums.org.uk.¹⁴

Equalities Review

In case you haven't seen this, the Government has commissioned a Review, chaired by Trevor Phillips (Chief Executive, CRE), which will investigate the social, economic, cultural and other factors that limit or deny people the opportunity to make the best of their abilities.

This Review is intended to inform the modernisation of equality legislation, and the development of the new Commission for Equality and Human Rights.

Further information from Rosie Seymour or Stephen Earl in the Cabinet Office (rosie.seymour@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk; stephen.earl@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk).¹⁵

Youth matters

Just in case you haven't seen this, the long-awaited Green Paper on provision for teenagers has just been published¹⁶.

The proposals in the Green Paper aim to address four key challenges:

- "How to engage more young people in positive activities and empower them to shape the services they receive;
- How to encourage more young people to volunteer and become involved in their communities;
- How to provide better information, advice and guidance to young people to help them make informed choices about their lives; and
- How to provide better and more personalised intensive support for each

¹⁴ Thanks to Philip Wark (CSG) for alerting me to this.

¹⁵ Information taken from The SEU News Brief, July 2005.

¹⁶ *Youth matters* (Cm 6629). The Stationery Office, 2005. Available as a download (pdf) from: www.dfes.gov.uk.

young person who has serious problems or gets into trouble.” [p5]

There does not appear to be any awareness of the roles that libraries, museums and archives can play. The consultation closes on 4 November 2005.

Commission for Rural Communities

The CRC was established in April 2005 to act as a rural advocate, with a specific focus on rural disadvantage.

It has recently launched a Rural Communities database¹⁷, with examples of how over 5000 communities have been tackling issues such as social exclusion, road safety and access to healthcare.

The database is searchable, and, from a quick look, does include material of relevance to us.

This is a very useful resource – recommended.¹⁸

Rural connections

The Countryside Agency have recently published this good practice guidance¹⁹ which brings together information on transport schemes that tackle social exclusion for those living in rural areas.

The pack consists of some 39 fact-sheets, the majority of which are about schemes in England (although one is about a Scottish scheme), and which tackles issues such as health, market towns, young people, older people, education-related, and visitor access.

There are also some summary topic-sheets (eg *The benefits of providing transport to healthcare*; *Transport and social exclusion in rural areas*).

Defra consultation on proposed new rural social and community programme

Just in case you haven't seen this, Defra are consulting “key stakeholders” (including DCMS) about proposals for the Rural Social and Community Programme which is designed to develop the capacity of the rural voluntary and community and parish council sectors to address important rural social issues and tackle the causes of rural social exclusion.

¹⁷ Available at: <http://crc.rocktimeweb.net/>.

¹⁸ Information taken from The SEU News Brief, July 2005.

¹⁹ *Rural connections: achieving social inclusion through transport schemes*. Countryside Agency, 2005 (ref: CA 206). Further information from Countryside Agency Publications, tel: 0870 120 6466; fax 0870 120 6467.

Further information at: www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/rsc-programme/index.htm.

“New insight to exclusion”

The ODPM has recently reported the results of consultations carried out last winter:

“Almost 1,000 people and organisations took part in a series of informal questionnaires and formal consultations, organised by the Social Exclusion Unit over Winter 2004/05 as part of its new work programme to improve the life chances of the worst off in society.

When disadvantaged people were asked what public services could make a real difference to their lives, they highlighted benefits, healthcare and education and training. The SEU consulted with those providing public services how they might make their services work more effectively for disadvantaged groups.

Key issues included:

- improving communication and awareness of the services on offer;
- making services more flexible to meet the needs of different groups;
- resolving funding problems;
- providing joined-up and integrated services;
- building self-esteem and confidence of disadvantaged people;
- providing long-term support that cuts across different ages;
- better use of ICT and sharing of data and information.”²⁰

The Equality Bill

The Women & Equality Unit in DTI have recently published an “Easyread” guide to the Equality Bill²¹.

Arts and Health²²

Ruth Hecht has been commissioned by Arts Council England South West and the newly constituted South West Arts and Health Forum [SWAHF] to carry out an audit and analysis of Arts and Health work in the South West region. This will help inform Art Council England South West’s Action Plan linked to the national Arts and Health strategy being produced by the Arts Council (due in September) and will inform SWAHF’s future work.

²⁰ Taken from: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pns//DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2005_0173.

²¹ *The Equality Bill: an easyread guide*. Women & Equality Unit, DTI, 2005. Available at: http://www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/cehr/easyread_guide_to_equality_bill.pdf.

²² Thanks for this information to *Finding the Dots: South West Cultural Sector Research News 6*, July 2005 (see www.culturesouthwest.org.uk).

The aims of the audit and analysis are to:

- Define the scope of Arts and Health activity in the South West region by identifying individuals and organisations working in Arts and Health including those involved in mental health, health promotion, substance abuse, sexual health, acute hospitals, GPs' surgeries, therapy, hospices, culturally diverse health groups, social care, elders, and health specific support groups
- Identify existing partnerships at a strategic level and explore the policies and strategies that have facilitated or supported these partnerships
- Identify Best Practice and gaps in the sector
- Present a minimum of 5 case studies that illustrate the range of activity and the key issues faced by the sector
- Make recommendations on how the Arts Council can best advocate for and support Arts and Health in the region

For the purposes of this research 'Arts and Health' refers to any creative collaboration between artists and people working in health and social care; and any creative initiative that directly enhances people's health and well-being.

In order to get as comprehensive a picture as possible of the work taking place across the region, Ruth Hecht would be interested to hear from anyone involved in the sector. Contact: Ruth Hecht telephone: 0117 3789898; email: ruthhecht@blueyonder.co.uk.

Children with Additional Needs

According to Scope²³, new research from the National Childminding Association²⁴ shows that almost one in three childminders is caring for children with additional needs.

The charity, One Parent Families, has also just published a new guide for lone parents caring for a child with additional needs²⁵.

“Social Inclusion Directory”

Oxfam's UK Poverty Programme has launched an online information bank, the “Social Inclusion Directory” [SID]²⁶.

It focuses primarily on anti-poverty work (and also work around gender), and is searchable (I couldn't find any examples of museums, archives or libraries listed).²⁷

²³ Scope Early Years *Roundabout* 32, July 2005. See www.scope.org.uk/earlyyears/.

²⁴ See www.ncma.org.uk/.

²⁵ *The lone parent guide to caring for a child with additional needs*. One Parent Families, 2005. (ISBN: 1-85199-2413). Further information from: www.oneparentfamilies.org.uk/1/lx3x1olx103x1oix2814x1/0/0/240705/0/0/The_Lone_Parent_Guide.htm.

²⁶ SID is available at: www.oxfamgb.org/ukpp/sid?ito=2156&itc=0.

Diversity

Managing diversity ...

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development [CIPD] has just produced a report²⁸ looking at managing diversity, and suggesting that badly-managed implementation (such as rigid systems and regulations) could create conflict and undermine business performance.

Race for Opportunity²⁹

Race for Opportunity [RfO] is a campaign run within Business in the Community (www.bitc.org.uk) and works in partnership with 180+ private and public sector organisations to help them reap the business benefits of implementing an effective race and diversity action plan.

2005 is the fifth year in which RfO has benchmarked member organisations, and the benchmarking report³⁰ has recently been launched – one of the organisations in the best newcomer list is the National Portrait Gallery.

RfO also gives tips for organisations wanting to improve their diversity and inclusion policies – further details from the BITC website (and an outline is also published in *The Independent* supplement).

Start with people ...

Demos have just published a new report³¹ looking at ideas for developing and improving community engagement³².

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²⁷ Information taken from The SEU News Brief, July 2005.

²⁸ *Managing diversity: linking theory and practice to business performance*. CIPD, 2005. Available as a pdf from: www.cipd.org.uk/subjects/dvsequel/general/mandivlink0405.htm.

²⁹ Taken from *The Independent* "Diversity" Supplement, 11 August 2005, pp2-3.

³⁰ *Action, accountability, advantage*. Race for Opportunity, 2005. [*The Independent* article cites this report, although it does not yet seem to be available on the BITC/RfO website.]

³¹ Paul Skidmore and John Craig. *Start with people: how community organisations put citizens in the driving seat*. Demos, 2005 (ISBN: 1-84180-143-7). Available as a download (pdf) from: www.demos.co.uk.

³² Thanks to Frances Hendrix for alerting me to this.