

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.

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Did you see ...?

CILIP Update May 2007

There is an article¹ by Helen Milner, Managing Director, UK Online Centres, about four new library projects that have been set up to demonstrate the social impact of connecting people to ICT (as part of the Social Exclusion Task Force's 'Social Impact Demonstrator' projects).

CILIP Update July/August 2007

The latest issue highlights² the Diversity Group's award-winners, amongst which were:

- Camden (Organisational Change Award) for their refugee work placements in libraries
- Hertfordshire (Highly Commended) for their rolling programme of community language stock surveys
- Staffordshire (runner-up) for their "Right to Read" project
- Joanne Harvey, Brighton & Hove (Personal Achievement Award) for her work in developing reading groups, including one for LGBTs.

Tackling social exclusion – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

Demonstrating the case for culture

This new publication³ from the South East England Development Agency [SEEDA] "contains a series of case studies of cultural projects which have been evaluated in one way or another. It looks at the evidence provided by

¹ Helen Milner "Demonstrating social impact: a blueprint for partnership" CILIP Update 6 (5) May 2007, pp 40-43.

² "Top diversity projects and people highlighted", CILIP Update 6 (7-8) July/August 2007, p9.

³ *Demonstrating the case for culture*. SEEDA, 2007. Available to download as a pdf (1.04 Mb) from:

<http://www.seeda.co.uk/Publications/Strategy/docs/CaseforCulture.pdf>.

these projects, the way it has been collected and the extent to which it illustrates the contribution made by the projects to wider economic and social objectives.” [p5]

It includes case studies, amongst others, of:

- Brighton & Hove Albion Football Club’s work to attract people back to learning
- Oxford’s “Evolving City” programme which used cultural activities to promote social inclusion and regeneration
- Brighton’s Jubilee Library and its impact on the local area
- Slough Creative Academy, “a network of creative agencies and businesses working in collaboration to provide training, employment and learning opportunities in the creative and cultural industries” [p22]
- “Towner on the Town”, using the resources of Eastbourne’s Towner Art Gallery to help combat social exclusion.⁴

Culture on demand ...

DCMS have commissioned this new research⁵ to investigate the demand for culture.

As their website states:

“Whilst there has been considerable research into the barriers to participation, such as price and physical access, relatively little has been known about the actual demand for culture. Specific knowledge about how best to maximise participation by responding practically and effectively to this demand was not widespread.”

DCMS therefore commissioned consultants FreshMinds:

“... to collate all the available evidence around the drivers of demand for culture amongst the priority audiences as defined in the Department’s Public Service Agreement target (Black and Minority Ethnic communities, disabled people, lower socio-economic groups). The aim was to identify the most important drivers of demand; to suggest tactics which address these drivers; to explore the motivation and experience which drive demand; and to suggest practical ways to engage a broader audience.”⁶

⁴ Source: MLA South East e-bulletin, 27.

⁵ *Culture on demand: ways to engage a broader audience*. DCMS, 2007. Available to download as a pdf (1.6 Mb) from: <http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/9C6750DA-8C19-4254-91B7-0F0FCA786750/0/CultureOnDemand.pdf>. There is also a summary version (528 Kb) available from: <http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/528C3EA7-69E4-442E-B730-B7732437F607/0/CultureOnDemandSum.pdf>.

⁶ Taken from: http://www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Research/research_by_dcms/cultureondemand.htm.

The report analyses what demands there are from the different groups, and then looks at what could be done to stimulate these demands. These include:

- Consultation and community engagement
- Using existing social networks
- ‘Context manipulation’ – “removing exhibits from their traditional settings which are not normally perceived as social spaces (turning culture *inside-out*) or, conversely, bringing social activities into the cultural space (turning culture *outside-in*) helps to erode the fear of the threshold.” [p11]
- ‘Content manipulation’ – “changing the content of the cultural offering in order to be more in keeping with what is of interest to groups ...” [p12]
- Thematic approaches
- Fostering a sense of fun
- Sociable and family-friendly activities
- Outreach
- Representation – “it has been repeatedly stressed that including representatives of target groups leads to a greater sense of identity. This can take two forms: on the one hand ensuring that staff employed by institutions are representative of local audiences and visibly involved; on the other the inclusion of representative images within the content itself. “ [p12]
- Word-of-mouth.

There are lots of positive examples of work in MLAs.

The report’s final recommendations include:

- Emphasising the importance of social networks as a key to driving demand amongst excluded groups – “DCMS should continue to champion the redevelopment of cultural spaces to maximise the opportunities for socialising and interaction.” [p144]
- Stressing the value of family-friendly experiences
- “Recognise, diagnose and share the constituents of existing success stories” [p144]
- Improving information-sharing
- Improving relevant marketing
- Targeted investment.⁷

Setting the pace 2012

At the end of last year, the MLA Partnership consulted on ideas for the sector’s contribution to the Cultural Olympiad. “The responses have now been distilled into concrete proposals for five exciting projects”⁸ [p4]

⁷ Source: MLA South East e-bulletin, 27.

⁸ *Setting the pace 2012*. MLA, 2007. Available to download as a pdf (2.2 Mb) from: http://www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets/S/setting_the_pace_11937.pdf.

“Our ambition is that our sector’s engagement with the Cultural Olympiad through Setting the Pace will lead to a transformation in the way people experience the inspiration, learning and creativity that museum, library and archive collections generate. Increasing participation by non-traditional audiences – particularly young people, black and minority ethnic communities and people with disabilities – is a core target for this programme.

The Cultural Olympiad also offers the chance to strengthen further the partnership between our three domains, and between them and the rest of the cultural and voluntary and community sectors ...”

The five projects are:

- International Exhibitions Programme: “To tell ‘Stories of the World’ through the re-interpretation of UK collections involving international curators and local communities, delivered through a partnership project of museum and gallery exhibitions in the years leading up to 2012.” [p6]
- The People’s Record: “Capturing people’s life stories in London and across the UK and their engagement with the Cultural Olympiad and the 2012 Games” [p10]
- The Record: “Setting a new standard for a comprehensive Games archive and enabling this rich legacy to be used to inform and inspire” [p14]
- Literature and Storytelling: “Inspiring young people by celebrating ‘London and the UK welcoming the world’ with the written and spoken word” [p16]
- Information Hubs: “Showcasing the cultural wealth of London and the regions to an international audience” [p20].

Finally, the document sets out the MLA Partnership’s vision for 2012:

“Museums, libraries and archives will help ensure that the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games are an inclusive event. We will engage with young people, celebrate diversity and help deliver the best ever Games, sustaining a legacy for people in London and in all regions.

We will champion the development of collections, audiences and workforce so that the 2012 Games will be a transformational event for the sector and our users.” [p22]

The values that will underpin these activities are to:

- “Celebrate London and the whole of the UK
- Generate a positive legacy
- Inspire and involve young people” [p22]

with the transformational impact on MLAs being:

- Increase in participation by young people
- More diverse audiences
- Greater community participation
- Learning and social outcomes for participants
- Workforce skills
- Tourism and profile of sector.

Further information from:

MLA Council

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MLA London

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CILIP Compass Project

CILIP have just published the report⁹ by consultants Tribal, looking at proposals for a work-based professional development scheme for BME groups.

The report analyses other existing schemes, from which the researchers then drew out key principles for the CILIP programme. They have come up with three models, with a strong recommendation for one – “a comprehensive personal development programme, strongly based on the workplace” [p3]. They have also looked at the financial implications, and have identified some potential sources of funding.

The report recommends obtaining some funding by the beginning of next year so that work can begin on drawing up a toolkit (similar to the one used in the Museum Association’s “Diversify” scheme¹⁰) and an initial pilot programme can be started.¹¹

⁹ *CILIP Compass Project: proposals for a work-based professional development scheme for minority ethnic groups – consultancy report commissioned by CILIP: the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals from Tribal*. CILIP/Tribal, 2007. Available to download as a pdf (223 Kb) from:

http://www.cilip.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/64233A22-618C-4ED4-9D3D-A68B38C31ABF/0/tribal_report1.pdf.

¹⁰ See: *Diversify toolkit: creating a more diverse workforce through positive-action training schemes*. Museums Association, no date. Available to download as a pdf from:

[http://www.museumsassociation.org/asset_arena/text/l/diversitytoolkit\[final\].pdf](http://www.museumsassociation.org/asset_arena/text/l/diversitytoolkit[final].pdf).

¹¹ Source: CILIP Wales Current Awareness Service, 357.

Tackling social exclusion – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

Aiming high for young people

This is the last report¹² of the Government's Policy Review of Children and Young People.

“... this document sets out a strategy to transform leisure-time opportunities, activities and support services for young people in England.” [p3]

It looks at:

- Positive activities as a way of improving outcomes for young people
- Empowerment of young people
- Access – looking at ways of attracting and engaging every young person
- Improving the quality of provision.

It draws on recent research¹³ which shows that engaging in positive activities has a major effect on later life:

“The most striking finding is that, even after accounting for the effects of low income or difficult family background, the activities young people engaged in had a significant additional association with their chances of later adult social exclusion.” [p20]

Huge emphasis is placed on the role of local authorities (and local partners) to deliver this strategy – and libraries are mentioned as a potential resource (particularly in the context of the Book Bars¹⁴ project).

The National Youth Agency has produced a special edition¹⁵ of its *Electronic Youth Policy Update* with an assessment of the report.

¹² *Aiming high for young people: a ten year strategy for positive activities*. HM Treasury, 2007. (ISBN-13: 978-1-84532-263-2) Available to download as a pdf from: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/2/6/cyp_tenyearstrategy_260707.pdf. A summary is available at:

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/?asset=News&id=71462>.

¹³ Karen Robson and Leon Feinstein. *Leisure contexts in adolescence and their associations with adult outcomes: a more complete picture*. Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning, 2007. Available to download as a pdf from: <http://www.learningbenefits.net/Publications/DiscussionPapers/Leisure%20contexts%20in%20adolescence%202007.pdf>.

¹⁴ See: <http://www.bookbars.co.uk/>.

¹⁵ See: <http://www.nya.org.uk/Templates/internal.asp?NodeID=95780>.

Code of Practice: identifying ‘what works’ for socially excluded people

The Social Exclusion Task Force has announced¹⁶ that it is working with the Government Social Research Unit (GSRU) to develop a Code of Practice for evaluating programmes to help socially excluded groups.¹⁷

Factors influencing social mobility

This new literature review¹⁸ “examined the factors that are facilitating and inhibiting social mobility in the United Kingdom (UK) in the early years of the twenty-first century.” [p1]

It looks at:

- Policy and social context, including the effects of globalisation:
“The 1980s saw rapidly increasing social and economic inequalities. While these increases have not continued, on many indicators the prevalence of poverty and inequality remain high in the UK compared both with periods before the 1980s and with other European countries ... Social and welfare policies under the present Government have focused on combating social exclusion and work as the most effective route out of poverty ... However, persistent poverty and inequality have led to some suggesting that more needs to be done to combat in-work poverty, including through sustaining and progressing in work.”
[p7]
- The concept of social mobility
- Social capital, cultural and social mobility
- Families, aspirations and the early years
- Education and social mobility
- Employment
- Health and wellbeing and social mobility
- Geographic features, eg “There is evidence that over the last quarter century communities have become more polarised, as a result of the increasing spatial concentration of individuals and social groups facing particular disadvantage.” [p63]

¹⁶ See:

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social_exclusion_task_force/documents/what_works/what_works.pdf.

¹⁷ Source: David Garner, ADP Consulting.

¹⁸ Alex Nunn *et al.* *Factors influencing social mobility: a report of research carried out by the Policy Research Institute on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions*. DWP (Research Report no.450), 2007 (ISBN-13: 978-1-84712-237-7). Available to download as a pdf (585 Kb) from: <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2007-2008/rrep450.pdf>.

This is a very useful introduction to key themes in social mobility, and illustrates some of the ways in which the Government and other agencies have tried to tackle the slowness of mobility in recent years.

Tackling social exclusion – Other Agencies

Monitoring poverty and social exclusion in Wales 2007

This “Findings” report¹⁹ from JRF updates the full 2005 report²⁰. As they state:

“[The 2005 report] concluded that Wales was becoming average in UK terms, having not long ago been far behind. By contrast, this *Findings* focuses on the breadth and scale of problems still faced in Wales. If this makes for a darker tone, it reflects the fact that the rate of child poverty and the proportion of people 'lacking but wanting work' are no lower than two years ago. Other problems remain stubbornly unyielding.”

Beyond the digital divide ...

This is a challenging new report²¹ from Futurelab, looking at revising the definition of the ‘digital divide’.

“... the tendency to view the digitally excluded purely in terms of ‘non-users’ of technology has prompted an narrow alignment of the digital divide with general concerns over social exclusion and deprivation. As we shall go on to discuss, the issues underlying the digital divide impinge on the ICT (non)use of individuals from all social backgrounds. In this sense the digital divide should not be viewed merely as a subset of general patterns of social exclusion. Although many people who could be considered to be digitally excluded would also be considered as being more generally socially excluded, the two categories are not mutually inclusive. In tackling the digital divide we must consider the substantial but ‘hidden’ digital exclusion of individuals who may well have relatively high levels of income and educational background, who nevertheless gain little from their engagement with ICTs.” [p12]²²

¹⁹ *Monitoring poverty and social exclusion in Wales 2007*. JRF, 2007. Available to download as a pdf (222 Kb) from:

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/pdf/2096.pdf>.

²⁰ Peter Kenway *et al.* *Monitoring poverty and social exclusion in Wales 2005*. JRF, 2005. Available to download as a pdf (2.65 Mb) from:

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/1859353967.pdf>.

²¹ *Beyond the digital divide: rethinking digital inclusion for the 21st century*. Futurelab (“Opening Education” series), 2007. Available to download as a pdf from:

http://www.futurelab.org.uk/resources/documents/opening_education/Digital_Divide.pdf.

²² Source: NFER *ontheweb*, June 2007.

Poverty, wealth and place in Britain 1968 to 2005

New research²³ from JRF shows that:

- “Britain is moving back towards levels of inequality in wealth and poverty last seen more than 40 years ago ...
- Over the last 15 years, more households have become poor, but fewer are very poor. Even though there was less extreme poverty, the overall number of 'breadline poor' households increased – households where people live below the standard poverty line. This number has consistently been above 17 per cent, peaking at 27 per cent in 2001 ...
- Already-wealthy areas have tended to become disproportionately wealthier. There is evidence of increasing polarisation, where rich and poor now live further apart. In areas of some cities over half of all households are now breadline poor ...
- The general pattern is of increases in social equality during the 1970s, followed by rising inequality in the 1980s and 1990s. Changes since 2000 are less clear ...
- Urban clustering of poverty has increased, while wealthy households have concentrated in the outskirts and surrounds of major cities, especially those classified as 'exclusive wealthy', which have been steadily concentrating around London ...
- Both poor and wealthy households have become more and more geographically segregated from the rest of society ...
- 'Average' households (neither poor nor wealthy) have been diminishing in number and gradually disappearing from London and the south east.”²⁴

In parallel, JRF have also produced a study²⁵ which examines public attitudes to economic inequality, and the related issues of poverty and redistribution. This has shown the complexities of these issues:

- “People do not necessarily think that those on low incomes are underpaid, but that those on higher incomes are very overpaid ...
- Public attitudes to redistribution are complex, ambiguous and apparently contradictory. Current evidence does not explain why a smaller proportion of people support redistribution than see the income gap as too large.”²⁶

²³ Danny Dorling *et al.* *Poverty, wealth and place in Britain 1968 to 2005*. Policy Press, 2007 £15.95 (ISBN-13: 978-1-86134-995-8). Available to download as a pdf (2.68 Mb) from: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/2019-poverty-wealth-place.pdf>.

²⁴ Taken from: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/housing/2077.asp>.

²⁵ Michael Orton and Karen Rowlingson. *Public attitudes to economic inequality*. JRF, 2007 (ISBN-13: 978-1-85935-593-0) Available to download as a pdf (247 Kb) from: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/2080-attitudes-economic-inequality.pdf>.

²⁶ Taken from: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/2097.asp>.

Disability issues – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

Disability Awareness Training for Libraries

The Open Rose Group comprises library staff involved in supporting disabled users at eight Yorkshire universities: Bradford, Huddersfield, Hull, Leeds, Leeds Metropolitan, Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam and York.

The group has produced a film plus supporting materials for use in libraries to assist staff training on disability issues. This film is arranged into four main sections, each dedicated to a specific disability and focussing on a particular theme.

The contents are as follows:

- Introduction by Patrick Stewart
- Dyslexia - using the Library
- Hearing - communication
- Mobility - access
- Vision - assistive technology

The students participating in the film are volunteers from Open Rose Group member institutions who each have one or more of these disabilities. They volunteered to talk about their experiences of using their Library in relation to their disability.

Each section has a supporting pack comprising four staff development activities which can be used by groups or individuals to raise awareness among staff. Further info from:

http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk:8082/lco/php/support.php/disabled/awareness_training.²⁷

Broader issues – Other Agencies

Equally spaced?

This new report²⁸ from Demos looks at public spaces and how they can be used to bring people together. It identifies eight types of public space:

²⁷ Source: Suzie Kitchen, Durham University Library.

²⁸ Hannah Lownsbrough and Joost Beunderman. *Equally spaced? Public space and interaction between diverse communities: a report for the Commission for Racial Equality*. Demos, 2007. Available to download as a pdf from: <http://www.demos.co.uk/files/Equally%20Spaced.pdf>.

- “Exchange spaces: places where people exchange ideas, information and goods
- Productive spaces: used by people engaged in activities to grow or create goods
- Spaces of services provision: support services are run from these spaces, either by statutory or voluntary providers
- Activity spaces: where people gather for leisure, such as for play, sport or informal events
- Democratic / participative spaces: for shared decision-making or governance
- Staged spaces: ‘one-off’ special occasions where people are brought together for a specific purpose
- In-between spaces: places which are located between communities
- Virtual spaces: non-physical spaces, such as those created online by social networking sites.” [pp19-20]

The report then looks at each type and cites case study examples. Finally, it summarises the research under four main recommendations:

- “be flexible in the use of space, understand the grain of people’s everyday lives and reflect it in the design of public space;
- aim to create the setting for ‘trusted’ spaces, where people feel secure to take part in unfamiliar interactions;
- foster positive interactions but don’t promote them: take an indirect approach to changing behaviour;
- embrace creativity and innovation in finding new and imaginative uses for spaces that will transform interactions between people.” [p34]

This report raises some very useful ideas about the use of public space, which are applicable to MLAs – important background reading.

Abbreviations and acronyms

CILIP = Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals

DCMS = Department for Culture, Media and Sport

DWP = Department for Work and Pensions

JRF = Joseph Rowntree Foundation

MLA = Museums, Libraries and Archives Council

MLAs = museums, libraries and archives.

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