

# 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](http://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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## **Network news – new website**

If you haven't visited it yet, do look at the new Network website, [www.seapn.org.uk](http://www.seapn.org.uk), and let John Vincent know what you think of it.

## **Did you see ...?**

### **Bercow Review of Speech, Language and Communication Needs – Call for Evidence**

As you may have seen already, the Bercow Review is an independent review of services for children and young people with speech, language and communications needs. This consultation calls for evidence<sup>1</sup> from all groups and individuals – the consultation period is from 23 October 2007 to 18 January 2008.

### **Audit Commission study on positive activities**

The Audit Commission has just launched a study which aims to support effective use of sport, leisure and other positive activities in reducing anti-social behaviour amongst young people. The study will:

- “provide guidance and tools to Local Authorities and their partners to enable them to get the best outcomes from positive activities used to reduce the involvement of young people in anti-social behaviour;
- assess the ways in which Local Authorities and their partners coordinate, deliver and commission positive activities to reduce anti-social behaviour;
- determine whether Local Authorities and their partners achieve value for money in their delivery of positive activities to reduce anti-social behaviour;
- establish the views of young people on positive activities within their area; and
- contribute to the development of an assessment methodology for comprehensive area assessment.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/conDetails.cfm?consultationId=1513>.

<sup>2</sup> See: <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nationalstudies/asb/>.

## **“Reflections on Channel 4’s Lost for Words season”**

The latest National Literacy Trust “Viewpoint” includes a clear analysis<sup>3</sup> of the debate around phonics and children’s reading, and looks at the coverage on Channel 4’s week of programming.<sup>4</sup>

## **Family Reading Campaign Conference/*Family Reading Matters***

The National Literacy Trust have also just published<sup>5</sup> the outcomes from the table discussions at the FRC Conference in October, “Key barriers and possible solutions to achieving an effective authority-wide approach to supporting family reading”.

This work is supported by the publication of a new magazine<sup>6</sup>, aimed at people who are working to support families. *Family Reading Matters*, which includes a free DVD, includes articles on working with health, housing, libraries, children’s centres, adult learning, schools and looked-after children.<sup>7</sup>

## ***Strong and prosperous communities – the Local Government White Paper Implementation Plan: one year on***

DCLG have just published<sup>8</sup> this brief assessment of progress to date in implementing the White Paper.

## **CILIP Update**

The latest issue<sup>9</sup> has a number of interesting articles, including:

- John Pateman “Local Area Agreements – get involved” [pp38-39]
- Christine Tootill “Reader development: planning and teamwork” [pp40-43].

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<sup>3</sup> Julia Strong “Reflections on Channel 4’s Lost for Words season”, [http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/About/NLTPerspective.html?dm\\_i=171236675](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/About/NLTPerspective.html?dm_i=171236675).

<sup>4</sup> Source: National Literacy Trust News, October 2007.

<sup>5</sup> See:

[http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/familyreading/barriersandsolutions.html?dm\\_i=171236675](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/familyreading/barriersandsolutions.html?dm_i=171236675).

<sup>6</sup> *Family Reading Matters*, Winter 2007. Available to download as a pdf (5100 Kb) – and without the DVD – from:

<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/familyreading/FRMatters.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Source: National Literacy Trust News, October 2007.

<sup>8</sup> *Strong and prosperous communities – the Local Government White Paper Implementation Plan: one year on*. DCLG, 2007. Available to download as a pdf (322 Kb) from: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/532485>.

<sup>9</sup> CILIP *Update*, 6 (11), November 2007.

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

### Work with homeless people

London Libraries Development Agency (LLDA) has been awarded a grant of £80,000 by The JJ Charitable Trust, one of the Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts, to develop “Opening The Doors”, a project which will improve access to books, reading and library services for homeless and vulnerably housed people.

The project will work by encouraging mainstream library services in a number of London boroughs to consider homeless and vulnerably housed people’s needs. Research carried out for LLDA by Brent Homeless User Group (B-HUG) showed that while many homeless people use library services, they feel there are barriers to access and want to be more involved in service design and delivery. The project will pilot new approaches and aim to find ways of working that can be replicated in other library services up and down the country.

Key aspects will include improving access to lifelong learning and critically examining barriers to participation such as membership requirements. An important aspect of the project is the involvement of a number of homelessness sector organisations.<sup>10</sup>

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## Tackling social exclusion – Other Agencies

### Volunteering works

This new report <sup>11</sup> begins by:

“... examining the central role of volunteering in relation to economic and sustainable development. It then discusses the contribution of volunteering to the development of safer and stronger communities ..., before exploring its role in helping to foster social inclusion ... Chapter four discusses the impact volunteering can have on the quality of life of the individuals that take part. The final chapter draws together evidence exploring volunteering in relation to lifelong learning and education. The report concludes by looking to the future, exploring some of the findings from the Commission on the Future of Volunteering and highlighting areas for government consideration.” [p5]

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<sup>10</sup> Taken from LLDA press release.

<sup>11</sup> The Commission on the Future of Volunteering. *Volunteering works*. Institute for Volunteering Research/Volunteering England, 2007 (ISBN-13: 978-1-906111-01-4). Available to download as a pdf (8480 Kb) from: [http://www.volunteering.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/4D138A1D-022E-4570-9866-B8E3A4F86C20/0/Final\\_Volunteering\\_Works.pdf](http://www.volunteering.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/4D138A1D-022E-4570-9866-B8E3A4F86C20/0/Final_Volunteering_Works.pdf).

It recognises the role that volunteering can play in working towards social inclusion, and particularly in supporting refugees and asylum-seekers.<sup>12</sup>

### ***Early years outreach practice***

Save the Children have just published this guide<sup>13</sup> to supporting early years work with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families.

As well as considering why outreach is vital for working with particular communities (and drawing out ideas that can be transferred to work with other groups), this guide also gives lots of practical tips and case studies.

It mentions libraries – although has more of a focus on toy libraries.

Recommended.<sup>14</sup>

### ***Identity in Britain ...***

This new social atlas<sup>15</sup>:

“... shows that British society is becoming increasingly segregated by class and less socially mobile ...

Young adults in the poorest neighbourhoods are nearly 20 times less likely to be in education, employment or training than those in the wealthiest neighbourhoods ...”<sup>16</sup>

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## **Broader issues – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations**

### ***Public value and the arts in England***

The Arts Council has just published the summary and conclusions<sup>17</sup> of its ‘arts debate’, the purpose of which:

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<sup>12</sup> Source: NYA *Electronic Youth Policy Update*, 176, 17 October 2007.

<sup>13</sup> *Early years outreach practice: supporting early years practitioners working with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families*. Save the Children, 2007. Available to download as a pdf (705 Kb) from: [http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/earlyyears/ey\\_outreach\\_practice.pdf](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/earlyyears/ey_outreach_practice.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> Source: Institute of Race Relations weekly digest, 16 November 2007.

<sup>15</sup> Bethan Thomas and Daniel Dorling. *Identity in Britain: a cradle to grave atlas*. The Policy Press, 2007 £29.99 (ISBN-13: 9781861348203). Further information at: [https://www.policypress.org.uk/catalog/product\\_info.php?cPath=10084&products\\_id=1161](https://www.policypress.org.uk/catalog/product_info.php?cPath=10084&products_id=1161).

<sup>16</sup> Taken from *Adults Learning* 19 (2) October 2007, p4.

<sup>17</sup> Catherine Bunting. *Public value and the arts in England: discussion and conclusions of the arts debate*. Arts Council England, 2007. Available to download as

“... was to engage a wide range of people in a debate about the value of the arts and the role of public funding. In particular, the arts debate sought to explore how public value is currently created by the arts today and what it would mean for the Arts Council and the individuals and organisations we fund to create greater public value. It also sought to understand how the Arts Council can best balance public aspirations with the needs and priorities of our partners in the arts community and other stakeholders.” [p4]

The summary report concludes:

“Our early response at the Arts Council is that there is clearly a call for an ambitious and wide-reaching programme of public investment in the arts – one that maintains a deep commitment to and focus on the quality of artistic experience. We believe that the challenge is to develop a system that:

- has real clarity of shared mission
- prioritises innovation and public engagement as critical means of achieving that mission
- is flexible enough in its funding to give different weight to different principles at different times
- encompasses a wider range of voices in its decision-making processes
- has appropriate forms of accountability that can vary according to the nature of its work.

We look forward to working in partnership with all our publics as we develop our approach to addressing these challenges over the coming months and years.” [p28]

The Arts Council has also published a range of supporting documents, including:

- A strategic challenges paper<sup>18</sup>
- A literature review<sup>19</sup>
- An outline of the research and consultation process<sup>20</sup>.

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a pdf (405 Kb) from:

<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/downloads/publicvalueartsdebate.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> Catherine Bunting. *Public engagement with the arts: Arts Council England's strategic challenges*. Arts Council England, 2006. Available to download as a pdf (35.88 Kb) from:

<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/documents/publications/phpaFIXiY.pdf>.

<sup>19</sup> Emily Keaney. *Public value and the arts: literature review*. Arts Council England, 2006. Available to download as a pdf (266.72 Kb) from:

<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/documents/publications/phpnzcVVG.pdf>.

<sup>20</sup> See: <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/artsdebate/research.php>.

## ***A new landscape for the arts***

At the same time, the Conservative Party has just published<sup>21</sup> the results of a review by its Arts Task Force (chaired by Sir John Tusa).

The review focused on four areas:

- The way in which structures of government, local government and arts policy administration work together – or not at all – to deliver the best possible result for the arts
- Taxation policy and the arts
- The role of education in the arts world and the arts in the education world
- The ways in which technology can aid the arts in new relationships with audiences.

The Chair's introduction states:

“By making recommendations in these four areas of arts activity and policy, we hope to open up new ways of devising arts policy and new ways of implementing it. Imaginatively followed, we could be looking at a “new landscape for the arts”. In such a landscape, politicians, artists and arts administrators could turn their backs, with sighs of relief, on some of the sterile debates of the last two decades. They have become hoary old chestnuts.

We can, surely, now accept that not only are the arts valuable for their own sake, but are also very effective in other fields of social interest and activity, from health to economic regeneration. It has been demonstrated time and time again. We don't need to go on.” [p2]

The Task Force has also published<sup>22</sup> the evidence it received.<sup>23</sup>

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## **Broader issues – Other Agencies**

### ***Learning power ...***

The Scarman Trust<sup>24</sup> has recently published a discussion paper<sup>25</sup> which

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<sup>21</sup> *A new landscape for the arts: the Arts Task Force submission to the Shadow Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport*. Arts Taskforce, 2007. Available to download as a pdf (62 Kb) from:

<http://www.artstaskforce.co.uk/type2.asp?id=101&type=2>.

<sup>22</sup> See: <http://www.artstaskforce.co.uk/type10.asp?id=107&type=10>.

<sup>23</sup> Source: MLA News Bulletin, 9 November 2007.

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.thescarmantrust.org/index.html>.

<sup>25</sup> Titus Alexander. *Learning power: a contribution to the national skills strategy*. The Scarman Trust, 2007 (ISBN-10: 1-903107-18-0). Available to download as a pdf

“... draws on the experience of Can Do Learning, a two year ESF Capacity Building Programme from Jan 2005 – Dec 2006, and other grassroots projects to reflect on what kind of learning is needed to overcome poverty and social exclusion.”

It argues that account must be taken of a far wider range of approaches than has traditionally been the case, if we are to achieve real Skills for Life, and makes recommendations for increasing involvement by everyone in learning and in promoting democracy.<sup>26</sup>

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## Abbreviations and acronyms

CILIP = Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals

DCLG = department for Communities and Local Government

ESF = European Social Fund

MLA = Museums, Libraries and Archives Council

NYA = National Youth Agency

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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](mailto:john@nadder.org.uk)

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from: <http://www.communitysectorcoalition.org.uk/news-events/papers-for-news-and-events/Learning%20Power.pdf>.

<sup>26</sup> Source: *Adults Learning* 19 (2) October 2007, p6.