



The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 382, 27 September 2023

Events

Events have been added to the Courses & Events pages on The Network website – see: <http://www.seapn.org.uk/courses>.

The ‘hostile environment’

Resist and persist: your guide to tackling the hostile environment

<https://www.jcwi.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=2b3a3149-713b-4cfd-a7b7-29d433a00212>

New from JCWI is this comic-book-style guide to starting to dismantle the hostile environment:

“Sometimes, the things we fight against can seem all-powerful. But the solutions here are simple: recognise the work of all migrants, dismantle the Hostile Environment and make sure everyone who is living here can access the public safety net.” [p5]

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies

Listening to unheard children

<https://speechandlanguage.org.uk/media/4703/listening-to-unheard-children-report-final.pdf>

(Source: Children & Young People Now *Update*, 4 Sep 2023)

New report from Speech and Language UK, which says that:

“Teachers now estimate 1.9 million children [...] are behind with their talking and/or understanding of words – the highest number ever recorded.” [p3]

As they go on to emphasise:

“Children who struggle to talk and understand words are:

- six times more likely to fail English tests at age 11,
- eleven times less likely to pass maths,
- twice as likely to have a mental health problem, and
- twice as likely to be unemployed as an adult.” [p3]

The report concludes with 9 recommendations for improving speech and language support for all children and their families.

“London is a major reason for the UK’s inequality problem. Unfortunately, City leaders don’t want to talk about it”

https://theconversation.com/london-is-a-major-reason-for-the-uks-inequality-problem-unfortunately-city-leaders-dont-want-to-talk-about-it-212762?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20September%206%202023%20-%202728627577&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20September%206%202023%20-%202728627577+CID_ddf2662c11bfbe637a37bf901f24ac20&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=London%20is%20a%20major%20reason%20for%20the%20UKs%20inequality%20problem%20Unfortunately%20City%20leaders%20dont%20want%20to%20talk%20about%20it

(Source: *The Conversation*, 6 Sep 2023)

Very interesting article which concludes that:

“London and its financial and professional services powerhouse are at the heart of the UK’s failing attempts to level up. We need its leaders to play a central role in our national debate about how to address this problem. This is no time for denial and distraction.”

Disability issues – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

Seven years on: disabled people’s rights to independent living, employment and standard of living in the UK

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/progress-disability-rights-united-kingdom-2023>

(Source: *News from the Equality and Human Rights Commission*, 31 Aug 2023)

“This report gives an update on the steps taken by the UK Government and the devolved administrations to implement recommendations from the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to improve the lives of disabled people across the UK.

It notes the progress that has been made by the UK Government and the devolved administrations, as well as the areas where improvement is still needed.”

Migration issues – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

“Learn to speak, read and write English: Homes for Ukraine”

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/learn-to-speak-read-and-write-english-homes-for-ukraine>

(Source: email from Iain Harris, Libraries Unlimited, 31 Aug 2023)

Useful collection of resources including info about ESOL courses, websites and apps.

The info also includes:

“The UK government is funding STEP Ukraine which provides free online English lessons and employment support to Ukrainian arrivals to help them improve their job prospects. You can apply for this intensive

programme on World Jewish Relief's website." [see: <https://www.worldjewishrelief.org/stepukraine/>]

Migration issues – Other Agencies

“What is in the UK Citizenship Test and why is it failing?”

<https://www.stisonbooks.com/media/UK-citizenship-test-policy-briefing.pdf>

(Source: Bristol University Press “Transforming Society” blog, 4 Sep 2023)

Brief critique of the existing Test:

“My research has exposed serious failings in all test editions. These include that some of the test’s “correct” answers are factually incorrect; that key practical information, like how to report a crime or register with a GP, is missing, while impractical trivia like knowing the height of the London Eye or how the founder of the first curry house married his wife means that the test is politically partisan and gender imbalanced [...]

It is the only citizenship test in the world that does not require anyone to know who the head of state is, how many elected legislators there are in Parliament, or what is the law court with the highest jurisdiction. Yet, all new citizens must swear allegiance to the head of state.” [p1]

The “Briefing” relates to author Thom Brooks’s book published last year, *Reforming the UK’s Citizenship Test: building bridges, not barriers*, see: <https://bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/reforming-the-uks-citizenship-test>.

“What next for evacuated Sudanese nationals?”

https://freemovement.org.uk/what-next-for-evacuated-sudanese-nationals/?mc_cid=1443efbe32&mc_eid=7d8713d645

(Source: *Free Movement Weekly Newsletter*, 29 Aug 2023)

A brief look at some of the issues facing Sudanese people settling in the UK.

“Lachin corridor needs more than EU tunnel vision”

<https://www.socialeurope.eu/lachin-corridor-needs-more-than-eu-tunnel-vision>

(Source: email from Social Europe, 5 Sep 2023)

Grim warning of the possible outcomes of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict (which, the article argues, Europe is ignoring whilst it focuses on Ukraine), leading to more migration.

“Voiceless”

<https://migrantsrights.org.uk/projects/wordsmatter/voiceless-words-matter/>

(Source: *Migrants’ Rights Network Newsletter*, Sep 2023)

In their “Words Matter” series, MRN have just published this critique of calling migrants “voiceless”:

“The insinuation that migrants are ‘voiceless’ is reductive and denies migrant communities of their agency. It detracts from the systems that force the migrant voice to be silenced and deny them a platform.”

LGBTQ+ issues – Other Agencies

“Post Office drops gendered titles from enquiry forms following campaign by LGBTQ group”

https://www.thepinknews.com/2023/09/13/post-office-drops-gendered-titles-from-enquiry-forms-following-campaign-by-lgbtq-group/?utm_source=piano&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=mypinknews&pnespid=qOd2WHpKLvhB3eXY_2m7T8yRv0uwRoB9Lvql3e1yqxhmvVw6pvCISCjFfonMg1wxlQffljXTVA

(Source: *PinkNews*, 13 Sep 2023)

“After a petition was set up by the LGBTQ+ campaigning group Include Mx, via change.org, just last month, the Post Office will remove titles from their general enquiry forms. The petition has received almost 300 signatures.”

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

“Libraries paving the way for youth enterprise”

<https://dcmslibraries.blog.gov.uk/2023/09/11/libraries-paving-the-way-for-youth-enterprise/>

Latest DCMS Libraries blogpost which looks at work in Oxfordshire:

“Oxford Westgate Library became a member of the British Library Business & IP Centre (BIPC) National Network one year ago. Since BIPC Oxfordshire launched it has engaged and supported thousands of young people with enterprising activities, contributing to Oxfordshire County Councils priority to ‘create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential.’”

Broader issues – Other Agencies

Children and young people's reading in 2023

Full report:

https://cdn.literacytrust.org.uk/media/documents/Reading_trends_2023_G6DVx3V.pdf

Key findings: [https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/children-and-young-peoples-reading-in-](https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/children-and-young-peoples-reading-in-2023/?utm_source=National+Literacy+Trust&utm_campaign=36acd703f2-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_08_25_12_51&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-36acd703f2-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D&mc_cid=36acd703f2&mc_eid=a2d98ab814)

[2023/?utm_source=National+Literacy+Trust&utm_campaign=36acd703f2-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_08_25_12_51&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-36acd703f2-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D&mc_cid=36acd703f2&mc_eid=a2d98ab814](https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/children-and-young-peoples-reading-in-2023/?utm_source=National+Literacy+Trust&utm_campaign=36acd703f2-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_08_25_12_51&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-36acd703f2-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D&mc_cid=36acd703f2&mc_eid=a2d98ab814)

(Source: National Literacy Trust *Training & Resources*, 5 Sep 2023)

The latest report from NLT has just been published. Key findings include:

- “Just 2 in 5 (43.4%) children and young people aged 8 to 18 said they enjoyed reading in their free time in 2023. This is the lowest level since we first asked the question in 2005.”
- “There has been a 26% decrease in the number of children and young people aged 8 to 18 who read daily in their free time since 2005 (decreasing from 38.1% to 28.0%).”

The Key Findings webpage concludes:

“Declining reading enjoyment across a growing number of children and young people must act as a wake-up call for all who support children and young people’s reading for pleasure and the many benefits it can bring.”