



## The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 385, 26 October 2023

### Events

**Events** have been added to the Courses & Events pages on The Network website – see: <https://seapn.org.uk/events/>.

### Cost of living crisis – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

**“Government figures show homelessness at record high amid housing affordability crisis”**

<https://newstartmag.co.uk/articles/government-figures-show-homelessness-at-record-high-amid-housing-affordability-crisis/>

(Source: New Start *Midweek Newsletter*, 17 Oct 2023)

According to an article from New Start:

“Homelessness in England reached a record high in 2022/23, rising by nearly 7% year-on-year, according to new government figures.

Data published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities showed that 298,430 households faced homelessness in England in 2022/23, up by 6.8% compared to the previous year.”

### **Food banks in the UK**

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8585/CBP-8585.pdf>

(Source: *MEMO [Minority Ethnic Matters Overview]*, 806, 23 Oct 2023)

New HOC Library Briefing (no.8585) which outlines the current position:

“The Trussell Trust, an anti-poverty charity that operates a network of food banks across the UK, reported a 37% increase in the number of three-day emergency food parcels it distributed between 31 March 2022 and 1 April 2023, compared to the year before. This continues a general trend of increasing need for food parcels. In 2021/22 there was an increase of 14% compared to the year 2019/2020, before the Covid-19 pandemic. The increase in the year 2020/21 was caused by the pandemic, while the most recent increase is due to the cost of living crisis.” [p4]

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

**“What if we could pivot our entire mission to supporting communities?”**

[https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/opinion/2023/10/what-if-we-could-pivot-our-entire-mission-to-supporting-communities/#msdyntrid=bkIh83SLYiqSKCwE3wXnxgFPDNEkJJ\\_8AgaPG29DSOQ](https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/opinion/2023/10/what-if-we-could-pivot-our-entire-mission-to-supporting-communities/#msdyntrid=bkIh83SLYiqSKCwE3wXnxgFPDNEkJJ_8AgaPG29DSOQ)

(Source: Museums Association update, 17 Oct 2023)

Very interesting opinion piece from Keith Merrin (Director of Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums). He starts by setting the current social & economic context:

“Once again, national figures, released by Ofqual, showed that the north-east has the lowest number of GCSE entries awarded the top grades in the country – some 10.8% lower than in London and the gap wider than the year before. It was also notable that the next two lowest performers were the north-west and Yorkshire, making it a real north/south divide.

Again, though, this failure by all of us towards the young people of the north-east is a symptom of much deeper and more concerning statistics. The region now has the highest levels of child poverty anywhere in the UK, with two in five children growing up in poverty and rates growing faster than anywhere else.

Shockingly, almost two-thirds of children from Black or minoritised ethnic communities in the region are estimated to be in poverty while more than a third of disabled children in the region are also living below the poverty line. Sadly, the region tops the national charts again in long-term ill health and low life expectancy.”

He then goes on to outline what TWAM are doing:

“But what if we could pivot our entire mission and completely refocus the whole organisation over the long term on how we support our communities?”

That’s exactly what we are trying to do. Our mission now is focused not on what we are but how we can make available our amazing assets – collections, buildings, brilliant staff team – to impact on the immediate challenges facing our communities.”

### **Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies**

**“New project launched to tackle loneliness for more than 25,000 veterans in UK care homes”**

<https://www.forces.net/military-life/veterans/new-project-launched-tackle-loneliness-over-25000-veterans-uk-care-homes>

(Source: *Later Life AGE*nda, 23 Oct 2023)

“A new project has been launched with the aim of tackling loneliness and isolation, as well as providing better health and wellbeing outcomes, for UK military veterans.

The Veteran Friendly Framework (VFF) will look to support more than 25,000 veterans living in care homes by providing resources to help with their practical, emotional and social needs.

In order to achieve accreditation for the VFF, care providers must meet eight standards, which include provisions to identify the wellbeing needs of veterans and their partners.”

### **Equality, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations**

#### **“Big Impacts from Small Changes: Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity at Wakefield Museums & Castles”**

[https://gem.org.uk/gem-conference-2023-big-impacts-from-small-changes-equality-diversity-inclusivity-at-wakefield-museums-castles/?mc\\_cid=2277acf384&mc\\_eid=a92006d267](https://gem.org.uk/gem-conference-2023-big-impacts-from-small-changes-equality-diversity-inclusivity-at-wakefield-museums-castles/?mc_cid=2277acf384&mc_eid=a92006d267)

(Source: *GEM eNews*, 179, 29 Sep 2023)

Blogpost from the 2023 GEM Conference, outlining this development:

“In 2022, Wakefield Museums & Castles established a cross-team Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity (EDI) working group, which developed an Action Plan to improve access and inclusion across our service.

Working with colleagues in Wakefield Council and external partners, we have introduced a wide range of measures to make our sites and programming more inclusive, accessible, and welcoming. Accepting that we can't do everything at once, we've committed to making small changes that achieve big impacts for visitors.”

The post includes a wide range of examples of steps taken so far.

### **Equality, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion – Other Agencies**

#### **“The DEI gap: How ageism is falling through the cracks”**

<https://www.trainingzone.co.uk/lead/culture/the-dei-gap-how-ageism-is-falling-through-the-cracks>

(Source: *Later Life AGEnda*, 20 Oct 2023)

This useful blogpost looks briefly at some of the effects of ageism, and then has ‘Top tips to foster greater age diversity’.

### **Health & Wellbeing issues – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations**

#### **“Mental Health Resources for Libraries”**

[https://www.webjunction.org/news/webjunction/mental-health-resources-libraries.html?utm\\_source=SFMC&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=October+18+2023+Crossroads&utm\\_campaign=wj-crossroads-fy24&utm\\_term=WebJunction%20Crossroads](https://www.webjunction.org/news/webjunction/mental-health-resources-libraries.html?utm_source=SFMC&utm_medium=email&utm_content=October+18+2023+Crossroads&utm_campaign=wj-crossroads-fy24&utm_term=WebJunction%20Crossroads)

(Source: *WebJunction Crossroads*, Oct 2023)

Useful new article from WebJunction (a round-up of US resources):

“This collection of resources can inform and support the work you’re already doing to serve your community, and help support your own well-being as you continue the important work you’re doing in the process.”

### **Health & Wellbeing issues – Other Agencies**

#### **“New dementia tool launched by Age Scotland”**

<https://www.scottishhousingnews.com/articles/new-dementia-tool-launched-by-age-scotland>

(Source: *Later Life AGEnda*, 6 Oct 2023)

“A pioneering initiative using storytelling to encourage people to open up about their own experiences of living with dementia has been launched by Age Scotland’s dementia policy forum, About Dementia.

The new Storytelling Resource is aimed at people who run groups and organisations working with people living with dementia.”

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

#### **“Sensing the Past”**

[https://gem.org.uk/gem-conference-2023-sensing-the-past/?mc\\_cid=2277acf384&mc\\_eid=a92006d267](https://gem.org.uk/gem-conference-2023-sensing-the-past/?mc_cid=2277acf384&mc_eid=a92006d267)

(Source: *GEM eNews*, 179, 29 Sep 2023)

Blogpost from the 2023 GEM Conference, outlining this piece of work:

“Funded by Wessex Museums Partnership – A collaborative project with Dorset Museum, Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre and members of the Dorset Blind Association October and November 2022.

Many visually impaired people often feel disconnected and isolated from their environment making them one of the most vulnerable groups during the Covid 19 pandemic. Blind and visually impaired people often experience high levels of anxiety when visiting public spaces. ‘Sensing the Past,’ funded by Wessex Museums Partnerships was created to connect participants with a shared interest in an environment where they felt safe and supported.”

### **Disability issues – Other Agencies**

#### ***The Disabled People’s Manifesto***

Full version:

[https://www.disabledpeoplesmanifesto.com/files/ugd/ca5b80\\_f6e1c7699ae544f3a7e2707237110f84.pdf](https://www.disabledpeoplesmanifesto.com/files/ugd/ca5b80_f6e1c7699ae544f3a7e2707237110f84.pdf)

Easy Read version:

[https://www.disabledpeoplesmanifesto.com/files/ugd/794e19\\_190f8304b2c34a4eb66a1ba11feb4f40.pdf](https://www.disabledpeoplesmanifesto.com/files/ugd/794e19_190f8304b2c34a4eb66a1ba11feb4f40.pdf) (there is also a Word version to download too)

BSL videos: [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJetGKvhNN4A-nrOutDKVTHBOYqO6\\_V-](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJetGKvhNN4A-nrOutDKVTHBOYqO6_V-)

(Source: *Equally Ours Newsletter*, 19 Oct 2023)

The Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations in England [DDPO] have just launched this manifesto (for further background, see: <https://www.disabledpeoplesmanifesto.com/about-us>).

The Manifesto calls on the next UK Government:

"[...] to institute a radical reform programme, to tackle disablist policy making and systemic oppression and injustice, to create a society where everyone has equal life chances and is valued and treated equally." [p2]

To achieve this:

"Simply put, austerity must end. Good public services are not a drain on the budget; they are an investment in everyone's quality of life. We need a long-term Disability Strategy, co-produced with Disabled people and our organisations, that tackles the root causes of our oppression and delivers fundamental reform and investment to enable Disabled people of all ages, genders and backgrounds to thrive." [p3]

It has a 4-step plan which must include:

- Representation and Voice
- Rights
- Independence
- Inclusion.

### **Migration issues – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government**

#### **"Schools: English as a Second Language"**

[https://mcusercontent.com/527dd1ec975830240434f8004/files/a09cc85c-38d2-3615-ba49-bcb406fcafe5/MEMO\\_805\\_16\\_October\\_2023\\_.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/527dd1ec975830240434f8004/files/a09cc85c-38d2-3615-ba49-bcb406fcafe5/MEMO_805_16_October_2023_.pdf)

(Source: *MEMO [Minority Ethnic Matters Overview]*, 805, 16 Oct 2023)

This was quoted in a recent *MEMO*, and I thought it was useful to note here:

"There are 66,265 pupils in publicly funded schools in Scotland with English as an additional language, based on the 2022 pupil census."

Further info at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/pupil-census-supplementary-statistics/>.

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

#### **"Scottish Community Archives Toolkit"**

<https://www.scottisharchives.org.uk/community-archives/scottish-community-archives-toolkit/>

(Source: email from Justina Gedgaudaitė to [archives-nra@jiscmail.ac.uk](mailto:archives-nra@jiscmail.ac.uk), 12 Oct 2023)

Very useful practical guidance.

“The Scottish Community Archives Toolkit has been developed by SCA as part of its contribution to the AHRC-funded Outreach to Ownership project. SCA supported community groups around Scotland who needed help starting or managing their local archive. SCA is grateful to Historic England and Historic Environment Scotland for their support.

This Toolkit is divided up into seven sections. You can dip in and out of each section as you need to and you can go straight to the links to other resources or the customisable templates.

*First Steps* will help you get started if you have little or no experience of working with archives. It includes information on what are community archives, setting up a community archive, sustainability and volunteer management. *Collections Management* will help you to develop the skills and tools you need to manage your collections effectively. This includes choosing what you will collect, how you will collect it and what information you need to keep. *Cataloguing* will help you to develop skills in cataloguing your collections. *Collections Care* will help you ensure that your collections survive for a long time by explaining how to handle your collections properly, protect them, manage environmental conditions, keep your collections secure, prevent damage and when to call in an expert conservator. *Digital Records* will help you to preserve digital records and digitised (scanned) material and make them available in the long-term. *Sharing Your Collection* will help you provide access to your collections, suggest ways of making your catalogues available online, and help you to develop talks, exhibitions and other outreach activities. *Legal Matters* contains basic guides to copyright, data protection and GDPR.”

### **Broader issues – Other Agencies**

**“Plan to ‘retain and explain’ controversial statues is flawed – why we should always question our monuments”**

<https://theconversation.com/plan-to-retain-and-explain-controversial-statues-is-flawed-why-we-should-always-question-our-monuments-215125>

(Source: *The Conversation*, 20 Oct 2023)

Interesting article which questions the new Government policy – apart from anything else, it may prove hard to implement.

The MA have posted a short article about the new guidelines,

<https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/2023/10/government-finally-publishes-retain-and-explain-guidance/#>.

The guidance itself is at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-custodians-on-how-to-deal-with-commemorative-heritage-assets-that-have-become-contested>