



The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 388, 4 December 2023

Events

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

Climate emergency/the environment – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

“UK Museum COP”

<https://www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/climate-crisis/uk-museum-cop/>

(Source: *Heritage Update*, 506, 17 Nov 2023)

“Representatives of UK museums, sector bodies and funders took part in the first UK Museum COP at Tate Modern on 31st October 2023 organised by the NMDC.

The event secured consensus from museum leaders on collective action to decarbonise the sector and mitigate the impacts of the climate and biodiversity crises.

The museum leaders today issued their first ever joint commitment for collective action:

‘As leaders of the UK museums, we feel a responsibility to speak out about the current climate and biodiversity crisis and call upon UK politicians and businesses to accelerate action to mitigate this crisis before it is too late. We are already around or beyond crucial tipping points: global temperatures are higher than they have ever been since humans emerged as a species, and extinctions are occurring at around a thousand times the normal rate. There is an existential threat to the world we have become accustomed to.

Museums are institutions with a long-term view. Many have collections relating to the Earth's five previous mass extinction events, and we are now in the midst of the sixth, the Anthropocene. UK museum leaders feel they have an ethical obligation to take action to alleviate that damage.

We will:

- Use relevant collections, programmes and exhibitions to engage audiences with the climate crisis and inspire them to take positive action,

- Introduce more sustainable collections management,
- Develop and implement decarbonisation plans which include relaxing carbon-hungry environmental parameters,
- Undertake measures to mitigate the impacts of extreme weather and adapt to new challenges,
- Increase biodiversity in our green spaces [...]"

Cost of living crisis/poverty – Other Agencies

“Five years on from damning UN poverty report, UK policies continue to inflict misery”

https://justfair.org.uk/five-years-on-from-damning-un-poverty-report-uk-policies-continue-to-inflict-misery/?utm_source=Equally+Ours+Newsletter+2022&utm_campaign=36948cbf9e-Newsletter+November+2+2023&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_93cf2d2bcb-36948cbf9e-120687778

(Source: *Equally Ours Newsletter*, 16 Nov 2023)

Powerful short article by Jess McQuail (Director, Just Fair) and Olivier De Schutter (UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights).

“When the former UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Philip Alston, visited the UK in November 2018 he concluded that UK government policies had led to the ‘systematic immiseration of millions across Great Britain’. Many hoped this would be a wakeup call, yet five years on the government is still fast asleep.”

“It’s not a cost of living crisis – it’s a poverty pandemic”

https://theconversation.com/its-not-a-cost-of-living-crisis-its-a-poverty-pandemic-218474?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20November%2027%202023%20-%202805728404&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20November%2027%202023%20-%202805728404+CID_119f81f386c4a0dd89a8121897a55dda&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=Its%20not%20a%20cost%20of%20living%20crisis%20%20its%20a%20poverty%20pandemic

(Source: *The Conversation*, 27 Nov 2023)

“Reframing the cost of living crisis as a pandemic of poverty would recognise the fact that the UK faces a deprivation emergency in which almost four million people are living in destitution. Poverty will still be an issue even when inflation has stabilised.”

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

Museums changing lives in Northern Ireland

https://media.museumsassociation.org/app/uploads/2023/09/25152721/HS392-MA-Northern-Ireland-Report_05.pdf

(Source: Museums Association email updates, 26 Sep 2023)

“This report captures how museums have responded to those challenges [of Brexit, Covid, cost-of-living crisis] and supported and continued to connect with their communities. The findings show that a majority of museums in Northern Ireland are undertaking at least one type of social impact work and making a positive difference to people’s lives.” [p4]

NB Fuller assessment to appear in *The Network Newsletter*.

“Libraries and Homelessness”

https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/catching-homelessness/202311/libraries-and-homelessness?utm_campaign=942275_Fortnightly%20newsletter%2015%20November%202023%20-%20MEMBER&utm_medium=email&utm_source=The%20Chartered%20Institute%20of%20Library%20and%20%20Information%20Professionals&dm_i=6WFS_K72B,9VBO9,2L984,1

(Source: *News from CILIP*, 15 Nov 2023)

Short article about the impact of a library stall at a community homelessness resource and health fair in the US.

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

“Being a young carer, you have to choose between your future and the future of the person you care for”: *Inquiry into the life opportunities of young carers and young adult carers*

<https://carers.org/downloads/appg-for-young-carers-and-young-adults-carers-reportlr.pdf>

(Source: *Children & Young People Now Update*, 15 Nov 2023)

Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Young Carers & Young Adult Carers.

‘Headlines’ include:

- 15,000 children spend 50 hours or more a week looking after family members.
- The increased time spent caring can impact life outcomes due to the lack of support on offer for young carers. For example, it found that young carers miss on average 27 days of school a year.
- There are an estimated one million young carers in the UK subject to a ‘postcode lottery’ of support, as many are not being identified by schools or local authorities. Some young people are being left to cope alone for 10 years, and the average wait time to get support is three years.
- Young adult carers are 38 per cent less likely to achieve a university degree. [Taken from *Children & Young People Now*]

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies

Cost of inequality 2023

<https://equalitytrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/resource/attachments/ReportCostofInequality-1.pdf>

(Source: email from The Equality Trust, 27 Nov 2023)
Important new report from The Equality Trust.

“We’ve always found that more equal societies work better for everyone, with longer healthy lives, better education systems, less crime, and happier societies. The UK’s inequality has left us more unhealthy, unhappy, and unsafe than our more equal peers.

It’s also causing huge damage to our economy. Over-reliance on the financial systems that allow for massive profits and wealth hoarding has hollowed out our infrastructure, encouraged massive regional disparities, and left us vulnerable to shocks and recessions.

Now we’ve found that there’s also a direct financial cost to inequality. As well as hurting our economy and communities, the UK is effectively spending huge amounts every year to subsidise the costs of inequality.”
[p2]

The report concludes that the overall cost of inequality, compared to the top five most equal developed OECD countries, is £128.4 billion:

“A more equal UK would have a stronger and more productive economy, working infrastructure nationwide, healthier and longer-lived lives, a better education system, less crime, and more control over our lives.”
[p3]

There is also a *Guardian* article about the report at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/inequality/2023/nov/27/uk-spends-more-financing-inequality-in-favour-of-rich-than-rest-of-europe-report-finds>.

Equality, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

Equality and Human Rights Monitor

Full report:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/2023/Great%20Britain%20Equality%20and%20Human%20Rights%20Monitor-%20accessible%20PDF.pdf>

Executive summary: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/our-work/equality-and-human-rights-monitor/equality-and-human-rights-monitor-2023-executive-summary>

Large print version:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/2023/Great%20Britain%20Equality%20and%20Human%20Rights%20Monitor%20large%20print-%20accessible%20PDF.pdf>

Easy Read version:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/2023/Equality%20and%20Human%20Rights%20Monitor%202023-%20Easy%20Read%20version.pdf>

Easy Read in Welsh:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/2023/Equality%20and%20Human%20Rights%20Monitor%202023-%20Easy%20Read%20version%20-%20Cymraeg.pdf>

Report on Scotland: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/our-work/equality-and-human-rights-monitor/equality-and-human-rights-monitor-2023-scotland-fairer>

Report on Wales: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/our-work/equality-and-human-rights-monitor/equality-and-human-rights-monitor-2023-wales-fairer>

(Source: Equally Ours *Newsletter*, 30 Nov 2023)

The latest review from the EHRC has just been published:

“This report is our comprehensive five-year review of how Britain is performing on equality and human rights.

This report looks across all areas of life since 2018, including:

- education
- work
- living standards
- health
- justice
- security
- participation in society

It outlines how equality and human rights protections have developed. It also identifies where there have been improvements or deteriorations in the outcomes experienced by people with the different characteristics protected in the Equality Act 2010.” [Taken from:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/our-work/equality-and-human-rights-monitor/equality-and-human-rights-monitor-2023-executive-summary>]

Equality, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion – Other Agencies

“Tackling the scourge of racism across the EU”

<https://www.social-europe.eu/tackling-the-scourge-of-racism-across-the-eu>

(Source: Social Europe *Newsletter*, 30 Nov 2023)

“The latest survey by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights shows racism is pervasive and persistent.”

The report, *Being Black in the EU – experiences of people of African descent*, is available at: <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2023/being-black-eu>.

The article looks more widely too:

“The figures are similar when we consider other ethnic or religious minorities: Roma and Travellers, Muslims and Jews.”

including brief info about systemic racism and possible ways of tackling some of these issues.

Health & Wellbeing issues – Other Agencies

Mental and physical health

<https://cosmostudy.uk/publications/mental-and-physical-health>

(Source: News from the Cultural Learning Alliance, 28 Nov 2023)

The latest “Briefing” from the COVID Social Mobility and Opportunities [COSMO] study has just been published.

‘Headlines’ include:

- “44% of young people in Year 13 are classified as experiencing high psychological distress (a figure that has barely changed since the pandemic)
- A quarter of young people have sought some form of mental health support over the previous 12 months. Of those, 35% said they are either on a waiting list or have not received some of the support they have sought
- Just over a third (33%) of young people say that the COVID-19 pandemic is still having a negative impact on their education
- LGBQ+ young people are more likely to indicate signs of poor mental health” [Taken from CLA email]

Neurodiversity issues – Other Agencies

“How to Support Neurodivergent Employees”

https://www.charityjob.co.uk/recruiterinsights/how-to-support-neurodiverse-employees/?_cldee=wUx3lZBrMrjyqgwO9B7CK0Z5zXmsHGv_KVHAGCEdXE0yt86PH7yTwLbqwMk55S3yU&recipientid=contact-449e2fd22746e411b4e4d89d6765e198-32466ad4e20949c5a575ecd93a6f502a&utm_source=ClickDimensions&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=NCVO%3A%20Monthly%20Trusted%20Supplier%20bulletin&esid=a2256724-8187-ee11-8179-0022489995e5

(Source: NCVO *Trusted Supplier Bulletin*, 22 Nov 2023)

Short but helpful article from CharityJob.

Migration issues – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

“Children looked after in England including adoptions”

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoptions/2023>

The latest data show that there are 1,630 more unaccompanied asylum-seeking “children” than in 2022 – the release also has some other useful info, including:

- They represent c9% of all looked-after young people
- 96% of them are male
- 86% were over 16 years old

A particularly significant piece of info:

“Almost half (45%) of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children were placed in semi-independent settings; this is up from 24% in 2019. Foster carers look after 38% (down from 50% in 2019) and 16% live independently (down from 25% in 2019).”

It was the number of young people living semi-independently that was picked up by Children & Young People Now:

“Increase in number of migrant children living in semi-independent accommodation”

<https://www.cypnow.co.uk/news/article/increase-in-number-of-migrant-children-living-in-semi-independent-accommodation>

(Source: Children & Young People Now *Update*, 16 Nov 2023)

Migration issues – Other Agencies

Deprivation and the no recourse to public funds (NRPF) condition

<https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/MigObs-Briefing-Deprivation-and-the-no-recourse-to-public-funds-NRPF-condition.pdf>

(Source: *Free Movement Weekly Newsletter*, 20 Nov 2023)

Very useful new “Briefing” from the Migration Observatory:

“The No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) condition is a legal restriction on individuals ‘subject to immigration control’, as defined in section 115 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. It restricts people from accessing most mainstream benefits and housing assistance if they hold temporary immigration statuses or lack a valid status. The NRPF condition can also indirectly affect family members and dependents of individuals subject to immigration control; for example, British children whose parents have NRPF and who cannot claim benefits in their own right.” [p1]

Also from p1:

“At the end of 2022, about 2.6 million people held visas that typically have NRPF, substantially up from previous years.

At the end of 2022, the top nationalities in visa categories with NRPF were India (665,000), China (316,000), Nigeria (268,000), Pakistan (147,000) and Hong Kong (121,000).

EU citizens who moved to the UK after 31 December 2020 under the new immigration system (84,000 at the end of 2022) have NRPF attached to their status.

All residents with irregular immigration statuses are subject to the NRPF condition. There are no official statistics about the size of this group, which is estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands.

Among recently arrived migrants – the group most likely to have NRPF – just under 100,000 live in economically vulnerable households (where all working-age adults are inactive, unemployed, or in low or low-medium skilled jobs) with dependent children.

Recently arrived migrants from Bangladesh (27%), Pakistan (21%), and Iran (18%) have the highest likelihood of living in a deprived household.”

“The New Refugee Homeless Crisis”

https://www.westlondonwelcome.com/the-new-refugee-homeless-crisis/?mc_cid=21fd128adc&mc_eid=7d8713d645

(Source: *Free Movement Weekly Newsletter*, 27 Nov 2023)

New blogpost from West London Welcome*:

“The government is currently trying to fulfill their pledge to clear their backlog of unprocessed asylum decisions by the end of this year, meaning that hundreds of people living in asylum accommodation in West London are suddenly being granted refugee status.

Normally, being granted refugee status would be cause for celebration, but the sheer numbers of people being granted refugee status across the UK – projected by the Red Cross to be 50,000 people by the end of the year – mean that councils and small frontline NGOs like us are overwhelmed with requests for housing support. We are seeing around five new positive asylum decisions a week at our centre alone.

Refugees rarely have the connections or money to organise a room for themselves after being suddenly evicted from their asylum accommodation. With no savings since they are banned from working or claiming benefits while seeking asylum, they are then given just 28 days’ notice to leave their asylum accommodation and find themselves a job or benefits to pay the rent, and find somewhere else to live. To make matters even more difficult, people have been facing even shorter eviction notice periods, with some facing just seven days to move out. Most landlords don’t want to rent to people living on housing benefit, making it incredibly difficult for people to find rooms in the private rented sector. As we told the Guardian, it is no surprise that the country is seeing a chaotic crisis of new refugees pitching tents outside their asylum hotels, because they have nowhere else to go.”

*“West London Welcome is a community centre run for and with refugees, migrants, people seeking asylum, and other locals.” [Taken from:

<https://www.westlondonwelcome.com/>]

From HK to UK: Hong Kongers and their new lives in Britain

Web intro: https://www.welcomehk.org/news/hk-to-uk?mc_cid=21fd128adc&mc_eid=7d8713d645

Full report:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/628b740a6ac4ac36ed7dd1b7/t/655615ea356bc245b542759e/1700140534691/HK+to+UK+report.Nov23.Final.pdf>

Report summary:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/628b740a6ac4ac36ed7dd1b7/t/65574f8737d50d33cd1a6f0e/1700220811123/HK+to+UK+summary.Nov23.Final.pdf>

(Source: *Free Movement Weekly Newsletter*, 27 Nov 2023)

New report from The Welcoming Committee for Hong Kongers (comments taken from report summary).

Findings include:

1. Many BN(O) Hong Kongers are well-qualified, but often say that their skills and experience are underused
2. BN(O) Hong Kongers are coming to stay and integrate. Most feel welcomed but some have experienced isolation and discrimination
3. Some locations are attracting fewer BN(O) Hong Kongers:

“There are higher concentrations in London (18%), the South East (19%) and the North West (20%) but significant numbers across the South and Midlands of England. Some locations are attracting smaller numbers, including nations of the UK other than England (4% in Scotland and just 1% in Wales and Northern Ireland).” [p8]

4. Financial struggles and emotional wellbeing:

“More than four in ten respondents said their financial health and wellbeing had worsened since arriving in the UK, with one in ten saying it had worsened greatly. The principal factor impacting on financial wellbeing is general high costs of living (53%). Difficulties accessing Hong Kong pensions is a source of financial stress for more than one in four BN(O) Hong Kongers.” [p8]

5. There is a need for more English language teaching, but few have accessed what is available

Amongst the report’s recommendations are some where libraries are already mentioned, and some where we must engage eg:

- “We recommend that local authorities take the lead in collating and disseminating information about social and cultural activities that bring together migrants and the host community. They can work closely with key local institutions, to encourage participation: libraries and schools, for example, can become hubs to bring together migrants and the wider community. Online listings of regular activities and of events, as well as social media, are likely to be effective in reaching a wider audience, including migrants with weak social connections.” [p12]
- “Good spoken and written English is needed for all aspects of integration, including for work, social mixing and political and civic participation. To strengthen the current provision and the awareness of English teaching available to BN(O)s, they should be made aware of the availability of free college courses during the visa application process. Information should

also be distributed by local authorities and by key institutions such as schools and workplaces.

Colleges and local authorities should ensure that English courses cover all levels from beginner to advanced. They should also refer to providers who do not operate the 3-year residency rule. Some combined authorities and local areas have ESOL hubs and networks. These should monitor demand and take-up from BN(O)s and facilitate onward referral between providers.

Awareness of provision could also be improved through outreach in community organisations, libraries and other social venues as well as through advertising online and in social media. Local authorities have an important role to play in this process.” [p14]

Homelessness among displaced Ukrainians in the UK: summary of research findings

https://www.redcross.org.uk/-/media/documents/homelessness-among-ukrainian-refugees-findings-summary.pdf?sc_lang=en&hash=A5851F870F4CCCCB5B70B380996DBDA

(Source: email from New Start, 28 Nov 2023)

New research published by the Red Cross.

As background:

“[...] while there is much to celebrate about the UK’s response to displaced Ukrainians, the response has also highlighted some challenges related to integration. One example is the provision of safe, secure and affordable housing. As the conflict has continued, challenges have arisen in transitioning from original hosting arrangements to longer-term living, working and inclusion and participation in communities across the UK. As a result, many Ukrainians have spent extended periods in temporary or unsuitable accommodation and a growing number are experiencing homelessness.” [p1]

The research findings include:

- Displaced Ukrainians have been at greater risk of homelessness than the UK’s general population
- Homelessness among displaced Ukrainians is set to get worse
- Without more government support, Ukrainian refugees will likely continue to experience homelessness at these rates or worse.

There is a Red Cross press release at: <https://www.redcross.org.uk/about-us/news-and-media/media-centre/press-releases/risk-of-homelessness-higher-for-ukrainian-families-this-winter>, and an article in *The Guardian* at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/nov/21/ukrainian-refugee-families-in-uk-at-risk-of-homelessness-this-winter>.

“We don’t know how many victims of modern slavery are in prison – why that’s a problem”

https://theconversation.com/we-dont-know-how-many-victims-of-modern-slavery-are-in-prison-why-thats-a-problem-218627?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20December%201%202023%20-%202810628457&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20December%201%202023%20-%202810628457+CID_61fdea8552cfa52eb754bf93c3d889b6&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=We%20dont%20know%20how%20many%20victims%20of%20modern%20slavery%20are%20in%20prison%20%20why%20thats%20a%20problem

(Source: *The Conversation*, 1 Dec 2023)

“Modern slavery affects an estimated 120,000 people in the UK. Under international law, countries must identify and protect survivors, while prosecuting and punishing those who traffic and exploit them.

Courts in England and Wales convicted 282 traffickers in 2022. But many victims of modern slavery also end up imprisoned, often for criminal activity they are forced to commit as part of their exploitation.

And here is the problem: we don’t actually know how many victims of modern slavery have been imprisoned. There are no official statistics.”

This article introduces a new report, *Tackling the blind spot of the UK anti-slavery regime: the role and responsibility of prisons in securing the rights of modern slavery survivors*, <https://modernslaverypec.org/resources/modern-slavery-uk-prisons>.

Broader issues – Other Agencies

“6 ways children’s rights can help create a cleaner, healthier planet for all”

https://theconversation.com/6-ways-childrens-rights-can-help-create-a-cleaner-healthier-planet-for-all-216764?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20November%2022%202023%20-%202802028373&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20November%2022%202023%20-%202802028373+CID_7b13154a22f77e0e8adaedb925a12238&utm_source=campaign_monitor_europe&utm_term=6%20ways%20childrens%20rights%20can%20help%20create%20a%20cleaner%20healthier%20planet%20for%20all

(Source: *The Conversation*, 23 Nov 2023)

Important article. The Committee on the Rights of the Child has drafted a general comment on children’s rights and the environment, with a special focus on climate change, and this can be distilled into 6 global demands:

1. “Provide all children with access to a clean and healthy environment.
2. Listen to children and take their opinions seriously. Respect their role as key players in environmental action.

3. Make the actions of governments and companies clear and transparent.
4. Encourage international cooperation.
5. Expand and improve awareness and environmental education.
6. Create spaces for participation, to share ideas and find solutions.”

“Look to the mainstream to explain the rise of the far right”

https://theconversation.com/look-to-the-mainstream-to-explain-the-rise-of-the-far-right-218536?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20November%2027%202023%20-%202805728404&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20November%2027%202023%20-%202805728404+CID_119f81f386c4a0dd89a8121897a55dda&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=Look%20to%20the%20mainstream%20to%20explain%20the%20rise%20of%20the%20far%20right

(Source: *The Conversation*, 27 Nov 2023)

Really interesting article which makes some very pertinent points:

“It should be obvious to anyone concerned about these politics and the threat they pose to democracy and certain communities, that humanising their leaders through fun reality TV shows or coverage of their hobbies rather than politics only serves to normalise them.”

The author argues that:

“We too often view the far right as an outsider – something separate from ourselves and distinct from our norms and mainstream. This ignores deeply entrenched structural inequalities and forms of oppression core to our societies [...]

[The mainstream media] are participating in an arena where power is deeply unevenly distributed, where the structural inequalities the far right wants to strengthen are also often core to our systems and where the rights of minoritised communities are precarious and unfulfilled. They have therefore a particular responsibility towards democracy and cannot blame the situation we all find ourselves in on others – whether it be the far right, fantasised silent majorities or minoritised communities.

Sitting on the fence is not an option for anyone who plays a role in shaping public discourse. This means self-reflection and self-criticism must be central to our ethos.

We cannot pretend to stand against the far right while referring to its politics as ‘legitimate concerns’. We must stand unequivocally by and be in service of every one of the communities at the sharp end of oppression.”