



The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 397, 1 May 2024

Events

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

Cost of living crisis/poverty – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

“English Heritage offers free access to food bank users”

<https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/2024/03/english-heritage-offers-free-access-to-food-bank-users/>

(Source: *Heritage Update*, 515, 4 Apr 2024)

“An initiative to provide free days out for people who access food banks has been announced by the Trussell Trust, a charity that supports people in poverty, and English Heritage, which cares for more than 400 historic buildings, monuments and sites.

From this Easter, people on the lowest incomes will receive a voucher for a free visit to their local English Heritage site alongside their emergency food parcel.

More than 100 different food bank centres in the Trussell Trust network and 25 English Heritage properties across England will be taking part in the partnership.”

Cost of living crisis/poverty – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

Child poverty: statistics, causes and the UK’s policy response

<https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/child-poverty-statistics-causes-and-the-uks-policy-response/>

New HOL Library “In Focus” publication:

“The government has estimated that 4.3 million children, or 30% of all children in the UK, were living in relative low-income households after housing costs in 2022/23. This represents an increase on the previous year. The government has said unexpectedly high inflation, driven by the war in Ukraine and supply chain challenges, contributed to the rise. It argues that falling inflation, rising real wages and uprated benefits will help low-income households in the year ahead.”

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

Inclusive histories: narrating our shared past in polarised times

https://www.britishfuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/History-report.Final_.pdf

The report sets the current debates in their context, particularly “The emergencies of Black Lives Matter and Covid-19 [...]” [p6], and the effects of what it calls “[...] major ‘history war’ flashpoints – namely the responses received by the National Trust for its report on colonialism and historic slavery”, and the wider ‘culture wars’.

Drawing on a range of pieces of work and the expertise of a number of key figures working in this area, the report draws together eight ‘conditions for confidence’ (“[...] insights and principles from the research that we hope can support strategic and practical thinking for organisations to engage in and navigate these heated debates.” [p37])

Recommended.

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

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

The Khan Review – threats to social cohesion and democratic resilience: a new strategic approach

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65fdbfd265ca2ffef17da79c/The_Khan_review.pdf

This important – and lengthy – assessment of progress on social cohesion was published in Mar 2024.

It makes some valuable and important points, eg:

“There have been twenty years of reports, recommendations and strategies on social cohesion, yet government focus has been intermittent, and the outcomes have been mixed. Today, there remains a continuing failure to institutionalise social cohesion. This is due to ongoing structural obstacles – identified as the 3Ps – where *policy*, *practice* and the *politics* of social cohesion have hampered progress.” [p14]

and comes up with a set of recommendations, possibly best summarised as:

“The [Social Cohesion and Democratic Resilience] strategy and action plan should be framed around the following seven strategic priorities:

- 2a) Promote social cohesion through a dedicated government effort, amplifying and reinforcing democratic freedoms and norms; and supporting evidence-based local cohesion initiatives.
- 2b) Build resilience in local communities against extremist ideologies and narratives, including conspiracy theories and disinformation.
- 2c) Engage people using an audience segmentation approach to help deliver bespoke interventions and programmes to different audiences

and ensure a more targeted approach. This includes those who are sympathetic to extremist narratives.

2d) Develop an early tension warning system that monitors and alerts DLUHC, the local authority and other key local partners about growing tensions.

2e) Marginalise and isolate extremist and other malign actors to prevent the mainstreaming of extremist ideologies and dangerous conspiracy theories which are causing severe harm and disruption in local areas.

2f) Respond quickly and effectively to flashpoint incidents and triggers.

2g) Repair relationships and engagement between local communities where they have broken down following serious conflict and flashpoint incidents.” [p17]

The CILIP survey is mentioned:

“Research carried out by the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals found that a third of librarians had been asked by members of the public to censor or remove books. 82% of librarians are concerned about the increase in such requests [...] The most targeted books as reported by The Guardian involve empire, race and LGBTQ+ themes.” [p60]

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

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies

“Is your workplace carer-friendly?”

<https://theageactionalliance.org/2024/04/23/is-your-workplace-carer-friendly/>

(Source: *Later Life AGEnda*, 24 Apr 2024)

“If not, it will almost certainly hurt your business, argues Deborah Stone of Mature Thinking. That’s because caring is increasingly becoming a part of people’s lives as our population continues to age and fewer and fewer qualify for support – and the nation’s growing army of informal carers are struggling to combine work and care.”

Interesting brief look at the impact of caring on people’s working lives.

“Building a Digital Nation”

https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/insights/building-a-digital-nation/?utm_source=Good+Things+Foundation+Newsletter&utm_campaign=3e5a4ae919-

[EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_04_05_08_12_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_874c1dbcc0-3e5a4ae919-110066901](https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/insights/building-a-digital-nation/?utm_source=Good+Things+Foundation+Newsletter&utm_campaign=3e5a4ae919-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_04_05_08_12_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_874c1dbcc0-3e5a4ae919-110066901)

(Source: *Good News from Good Things*, Apr 2024)

“Each year Good Things Foundation create a Digital Nation infographic, gathering together the facts and stats about digital inclusion and exclusion in the UK.”

This is the infographic for 2024.

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

Press release: “Suffolk Libraries launches new Reading with Dementia project”

<https://www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/about/news/suffolk-libraries-launches-new-reading-with-dementia-project>

(Source: *Public Libraries News*, 28 Apr 2024)

“Suffolk Libraries is launching a new project to provide support, companionship and resources to anyone in Suffolk affected by dementia.

Reading with Dementia is an exciting and vital new initiative delivered by Suffolk Libraries which is being funded as part of the Reading Well Community Champions project delivered by The Reading Agency. This is part of a wider Reading Well activation programme funded by Arts Council England and delivered in partnership with Libraries Connected”

What is the potential of public libraries to promote public mental health & wellbeing? Findings from a cross-sectional study of community-dwelling adults

<https://advance.sagepub.com/users/720112/articles/704981-what-is-the-potential-of-public-libraries-to-promote-public-mental-health-wellbeing-findings-from-a-cross-sectional-study-of-community-dwelling-adults>

(Source: *Community Libraries Network Newsletter*, Apr 2024)

Results of a research survey:

“Libraries already offer a variety of resources that either directly or indirectly support the health and wellbeing of community-dwelling adults and young people, but public awareness of these services is limited. By acting as community hubs, libraries are ideally suited to deliver interventions to help tackle the increasing health and digital inequalities following the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic.” [p2]

Disability issues – Other Agencies

“A trip down memory lane: celebrating 35 years of Living Paintings”

<https://livingpaintings.org/news/a-trip-down-memory-lane-celebrating-35-years-of-living-paintings>

(Source: email from Living Paintings, 26 Apr 2024)

“This year Living Paintings celebrates 35 years of bringing the visual world to life for blind and visually impaired people of all ages. As part of our celebrations, we thought we’d take a whistlestop trip down memory lane and share just a few of our favourite moments from the last four decades.”

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

“Somerset Libraries Neurodiversity books”

<https://somerseapple.co.uk/news/somerset-libraries-launch-neurodiversity-books>

(Source: *Public Libraries News*, 24 Mar 2024)

“SOMERSET Libraries are launching a new Neurodiversity book collection next month to coincide with Autism Acceptance Week [...]

The new book collection replaces the pioneering Somerset Autism Collection, which was created in 2015. In the last nine years, research and writing about autism has grown and the new collection will showcase the best of this. The list of books is available on the Somerset Libraries website [see: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries/accessible-services-and-health-and-wellbeing/>].

It will also cover a wider range of conditions associated with neurodiversity, including ADHD, demand avoidance, dyslexia, and dyspraxia.”

“Autism Accessible Browsing: a Community Effort at the Iowa City Public Library”

https://www.webjunction.org/news/webjunction/autism-accessible-browsing-icpl.html?utm_source=SFMC&utm_medium=email&utm_content=April+17+2024+Crossroads&utm_campaign=wj-crossroads-fy24&utm_term=WebJunction%20Crossroads

(Source: WebJunction *Crossroads*, 17 Apr 2024)

“Read on to find out how Jessie Witherall and Dina Bishara, co-founders of the Iowa City Autism Community (ICAC) and each the mother of a child with autism, teamed up with Angela Pilkington, the Children's Services Coordinator at the Iowa City Public Library (ICPL), to affect change in their community, and how you might consider this type of program and collaboration for your library.”

“Fiction Books by #ActuallyAutistic Authors”

https://search.worldcat.org/lists/fc1d15ed-09d0-4950-a434-f3bee9629071?limit=25&offset=51&orderBy=created-dsc&utm_source=SFMC&utm_medium=email&utm_content=April+17+2024+Crossroads&utm_campaign=wj-crossroads-fy24&utm_term=WebJunction%20Crossroads

(Source: WebJunction *Crossroads*, 17 Apr 2024)

“Here is a list of books by very creative autistic authors.”

“Fiction books with Autistic Youth”

https://search.worldcat.org/lists/a3a6a07f-c453-420b-83e2-595f04c72a9e?utm_source=SFMC&utm_medium=email&utm_content=April+17+2024+Crossroads&utm_campaign=wj-crossroads-fy24&utm_term=WebJunction%20Crossroads

(Source: WebJunction *Crossroads*, 17 Apr 2024)

“Books that have autistic characters. Primarily interested in Young Adult novels.”

“Helping libraries to be autism-ready”

https://www.webjunction.org/news/webjunction/helping-libraries-be-autism-ready.html?utm_source=SFMC&utm_medium=email&utm_content=April+17+2024

[024+Crossroads&utm_campaign=wj-crossroads-fy24&utm_term=WebJunction%20Crossroads](https://www.webjunction.com/crossroads/024+Crossroads&utm_campaign=wj-crossroads-fy24&utm_term=WebJunction%20Crossroads)

(Source: WebJunction *Crossroads*, 17 Apr 2024)

Short article introducing the “Autism-Ready Libraries Toolkit” ...

“Autism-Ready Libraries Toolkit”

<https://sites.uw.edu/neurodiversity/research-projects/autism-ready-libraries/toolkit/>.

(Source: WebJunction *Crossroads*, 17 Apr 2024)

“Our toolkit website contains free online training modules and resources for youth-serving librarians and library staff in public libraries who would like to better serve families with autistic children. The Autism-Ready Libraries Toolkit can also be used by anyone with an interest in autism inclusion and inclusive early literacy practices, including school librarians, library managers and administrators, parents and caregivers, community leaders, and teachers.”

Recommended.

Migration issues – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

Asylum support: accommodation and financial support for asylum seekers

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN01909/SN01909.pdf>

(Source: MEMO [Minority Ethnic Matters Overview], 828, 8 Apr 2024)

HOC Library “Research Briefing”:

“This briefing focuses on obligations towards asylum seekers waiting for a decision on their asylum claim or appeal (adult applicants and their dependants) [...]

Asylum support is a reserved matter, so the support arrangements detailed in this briefing apply to asylum seekers in all the constituent parts of the UK.” [p6]

“Asylum Welcome Toolkit”

<https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/communities-and-social-justice/migrants-and-refugees/asylum-welcome-toolkit>

(Source: WMSMP [West Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership] *Monthly Newsletter*, Mar 2024)

This is an excellent, practical guide:

“Welcome to the Greater London Authority's Asylum Welcome Toolkit, which aims to support local authorities to improve social integration outcomes for people seeking asylum.

The toolkit was developed with input from 11 London boroughs who participated in a series of Design Lab workshops in 2023, commissioned by the Mayor as part of his Asylum Welcome Programme and delivered

by British Future and Refugees in Effective and Active Partnership (REAP), who also produced the toolkit.

The toolkit contains guidance, case studies and resources and is set out into individual pages covering different areas of a borough's asylum response.”

It has sections on:

- “Getting started: working with people seeking asylum”, <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/communities-and-social-justice/migrants-and-refugees/asylum-welcome-toolkit/getting-started-working-people-seeking-asylum>
- “Getting started: structuring your asylum response”, <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/communities-and-social-justice/migrants-and-refugees/asylum-welcome-toolkit/getting-started-structuring-your-asylum-response>
- “Getting started: building an asylum integration strategy”, <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/communities-and-social-justice/migrants-and-refugees/asylum-welcome-toolkit/getting-started-building-asylum-integration-strategy>
- “Outreach”, <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/communities-and-social-justice/migrants-and-refugees/asylum-welcome-toolkit/outreach>
- “Supporting changing needs”, <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/communities-and-social-justice/migrants-and-refugees/asylum-welcome-toolkit/supporting-changing-needs>
- “Vulnerability and safeguarding”, <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/communities-and-social-justice/migrants-and-refugees/asylum-welcome-toolkit/vulnerability-and-safeguarding>
- “Coproduction and consultation”, <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/communities-and-social-justice/migrants-and-refugees/asylum-welcome-toolkit/coproduction-and-consultation>
- “Volunteering opportunities”, <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/communities-and-social-justice/migrants-and-refugees/asylum-welcome-toolkit/volunteering-opportunities>.

Migration issues – Other Agencies

“The shifting terrain of anti-migrant activism”

<https://hopenotheate.org.uk/state-of-hate-2024-shifting-terrains/>

(Source: WMSMP [West Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership] *Monthly Newsletter*, Apr 2024)

New from HOPE not Hate is this “State of Hate 2024” feature which looks at the far-right involvement in anti-migration actions:

“From Kent to Cornwall and from Dorset to Renfrewshire, far-right activists either led campaigns, orchestrated accommodation visits or tried to insert themselves into local opposition movements against plans to house migrants nearby. Some demonstrations were flashes in the pan; mobilisations which either burned brightly for a short period, or struggled to get off the ground at all. Others, however, were much longer, drawn-out affairs, for example in Erskine, where 20 demonstrations took place throughout the year.

In the latter half of 2023, this picture changed once again. The energy and enthusiasm for demonstrations had dissipated, whilst the accommodation visits of the ‘migrant hunters’ became more infrequent.

Taking their place has been a new form of ‘always-on’ protest or ‘anti-migrant blockades’ outside proposed accommodation sites.”

“Working migrant families locked out of funded childcare expansion, campaigners warn”

<https://www.cypnow.co.uk/news/article/working-migrant-families-locked-out-of-funded-childcare-expansion-campaigners-warn>

(Source: *Children & Young People Now Update*, 22 Apr 2024)

“Despite meeting the Department for Education’s eligibility criteria around working hours, human rights charity Praxis says that around 20,000 families are missing out on the government’s expanded childcare offer due to visa stipulations.”

UK Trauma Council: “Resources for professionals”

<https://uktraumacouncil.org/resources/childhood-trauma-migration-asylum-professionals?cn-reloaded=1>

(Source: EoE AS&R/MW *Bi-Monthly Newsflash* Jan-Mar 2024)

There are two sets of resources here which will be really helpful background for us:

- *Childhood trauma, migration and asylum: a toolkit for education settings*, <https://uktraumacouncil.link/documents/Childhood%20Trauma,%20Migration%20and%20Asylum/UKTC-CTAM-education-toolkit.pdf>
- *Childhood trauma, migration and asylum: a toolkit for community organisations*, <https://uktraumacouncil.link/documents/Childhood%20Trauma,%20Migration%20and%20Asylum/UKTC-CTMA-community-toolkit.pdf>.

“This toolkit [...] is intended for staff and volunteers who do not have mental health training and work directly with children and young people seeking asylum in the UK.”

“Latest Home Office statistics show Vietnamese nationals are the government’s likely next target”

https://freemovement.org.uk/latest-home-office-statistics-show-vietnamese-nationals-are-the-governments-likely-next-target/?utm_source=Free+Movement&utm_campaign=c9bab03cf1-Asylum+updates&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_792133aa40-c9bab03cf1-116428530&mc_cid=c9bab03cf1&mc_eid=7d8713d645

(Source: *Free Movement Refugee and Asylum Update*, 25 Apr 2024)

According to Free Movement:

“The Home Office has published its latest ‘ad hoc’ statistics release, showing a dramatic increase in the number of Vietnamese people coming to the UK and a 24% increase in people detected crossing the Channel so far in 2024.”

This refers to “Additional statistics relating to Illegal Migration (April 2024)”, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statistics-relating-to-the-illegal-migration-bill/additional-statistics-relating-to-illegal-migration-march-2024>, which states that:

“Provisional operational data shows that between 1 January and 21 April 2024 there were:

- 6,265 small boat arrivals compared to 5,049 in the same period last year, an increase of 24%
- together, Vietnamese (1,266) and Afghan (1,216) arrivals comprised 40% of the total arrivals in this period and are the top 2 nationalities arriving so far in 2024
- Vietnamese nationals make up 20% of all arrivals so far this year compared to less than 3% (125) in the same period last year; this represents a ten-fold year-on-year increase in Vietnamese arrivals”

There is a bit more info about this in a recent *Guardian* article, “What is the real story behind Vietnamese Channel boat crossings?”, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2024/apr/26/what-is-the-real-story-behind-vietnamese-channel-boat-crossings#:~:text=%E2%80%9CThere%20is%20a%20well%2Destablished,trafficking%20statistics%2C%E2%80%9D%20he%20said..>

LGBTQ+ issues – Other Agencies

“UK LGBTIQ rights under threat: a reflection on history”

<https://diva-magazine.com/2024/03/04/uk-lgbtiq-rights-under-threat/>

Important short piece by Laila El-Metoui (founder of Pride in Education), which argues:

“As we celebrate the progress we’ve made over the last few decades, it is vital that we also focus on what we can do to support future generations”

As she says:

“As we reflect on LGBTIQA History Month in the UK, it’s essential to acknowledge the resilience and courage of the community in the face of adversity. Despite the challenges and setbacks, LGBTIQA individuals and allies continue to advocate for equality, dignity, and acceptance.

However, we must remain vigilant, for what was once given can easily be taken away. The progress we’ve made in advancing LGBTIQA rights is not guaranteed, and it’s essential to remain steadfast in our commitment to defending these hard-won rights.

Through education and advocacy, we can challenge harmful stereotypes, promote understanding, and create a more inclusive society for all.”

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

“It’s a Lively Place’: The Impact of Public Library Clubs for Adults on How Attendees of These Clubs Perceive and Use Public Libraries”

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/01616846.2024.2340187>

(Source: *Public Libraries News*, 28 Apr 2024)

Open access article about the use of library clubs; according to the abstract:

“Participants tended to be using library services more often – and in different ways – due to their attendance of library clubs. Interviewees believed that the library had become more relaxed over time, and that the purpose of public libraries went beyond a focus on books. These findings suggest that library clubs might lead to attendees expanding their ideas of the role libraries can play in their lives.”

Broader issues – Other Agencies

Mainstreaming hate: how the Right exploits the crisis to divide us

<https://irr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Mainstreaming-the-far-Right-2.pdf>

(Source: *IRR News*, 4 Apr 2024)

Important analysis of “[...] how far-right ideas have already passed into the mainstream and what we can do to push back against them.” [p1]

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

Volunteers’ Week 3-9 June 2024

<https://volunteersweek.org/get-involved/resources/>

(Source: *NCVO Volunteering Round-up*, Apr 2024)

This year is the 40th anniversary of Volunteers’ Week, and there is a range of new resources now available to download from the Volunteers’ Week website.