

The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 417, 14 May 2025

Events

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

Black Lives Matter/Anti-racism

“The Future of DEI and Anti-Racism – Why it isn’t a Want, But a Need for Black Communities”

<https://blackequityorg.com/the-future-of-dei-and-anti-racism-why-it-isnt-a-want-but-a-need-for-black-communities/>

(Source: email from Black Equity Organisation, 9 May 2025)

Important article from BEO:

“As anti-DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) sentiment gains traction in the US, its ripple effects are being felt here in the UK – quietly and decisively. Following the election of Donald Trump overseas and a growing backlash against diversity, equity and inclusion, major corporations – including McDonald’s, Meta and Amazon – have scaled back or abandoned their DEI commitments. In parallel, some UK businesses have begun to dilute, sideline, or erase their own DEI work.

What may seem like a simple shift in language, is actually an erasure of terms such as ‘anti-racism’, ‘intersectionality’, and ‘inclusion’ to more generic umbrella HR terms. Meanwhile, the Financial Conduct Authority’s (FCA) and Prudential Regulation Authority’s (PRA) scrapping of proposed diversity target due to industry pressure, is another example of institutions backtracking when racial equity work becomes politically inconvenient [...]

At BEO, we reject the idea that the continued delivery of DEI and anti-racism policies are simply a corporate ‘nice to have’. They are a moral, economic and strategic imperative. We unapologetically call on businesses and institutions to do more, not less to dismantle structural racism. Failure to continue to address inequity will lead to financial risk, deeper systemic inequality, and reputational harm.”

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies

“What excluded children think about their education in alternative provision – and why it matters”

https://theconversation.com/what-excluded-children-think-about-their-education-in-alternative-provision-and-why-it-matters-252124?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20April%2028%202025%20-%203355234217&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20April%2028%202025%20-%203355234217+CID_c47fa44c76ab4d4b3a98fde7d59ed838&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=What%20excluded%20children%20think%20ab

[out%20their%20education%20in%20alternative%20provision%20%20and%20why%20it%20matters](#)

(Source: *The Conversation*, 29 Apr 2025)

Interesting article looking at alternative provision:

“Nearly 16,000 children in England learn in state-funded alternative provision (AP). These are educational settings for school-aged pupils who are unable to attend mainstream school. These pupils may have been excluded from their previous school, have a medical condition or find themselves without a school place.”

“Power in partnerships: Libraries, charities, MPs, businesses”

<https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/discover/digital-inclusion-insights/digital-inclusion-insights-2025/power-in-partnerships>

(Source: *Good News from Good Things Foundation*, Apr 2025)

New post looking at how Bury Library is tackling digital inclusion locally.

Health & Wellbeing issues – Other Agencies

An exploration of local variations in health and job outcomes across the UK: a report for the Commission for Healthier Working Lives

https://learningandwork.org.uk/resources/research-and-reports/an-exploration-of-local-variations-in-health-and-job-outcomes-across-the-uk/?mptk=1e8f26e257c7f249544d5f8777844d083956e0910b8cf4f5faae19765cc11ee741cafa4715ab13cf39e79f9dc990e732_f40da0451c45be9fbc207a2fe21f6aa2

(Source: email from Learning and Work Institute, 10 Mar 2025)

“New analysis from Learning and Work Institute for the Commission for Healthier Working Lives shows that the number of people economically inactive due to ill health has risen across all UK nations and regions. But a closer look at variations in health and job outcomes across the country reveals persistent inequalities between local areas. In 2020-22, nearly 10% of the total number of people who were economically inactive due to ill health lived in only 20 local authorities (out of 372) representing 4% of the working age population.

The report takes a detailed look at these geographical variations and potential solutions, combining analysis of national data and existing research with six local area case studies. The selected case study areas were Belfast, Coventry, Newport, South Ayrshire, Westminster, and Wokingham.”

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

“How libraries can support blind and partially sighted communities”

https://readingagency.org.uk/how-libraries-can-support-blind-and-partially-sighted-communities/?utm_source=The+Reading+Agency&utm_campaign=745bd96bfb-adult_news_13_5_2025&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ef82b5d6fa-745bd96bfb-51507097&mc_cid=745bd96bfb&mc_eid=3fa1d39831

(Source: The Reading Agency *Adult Reading News*, 13 May 2025)

Just in case you haven't seen this report of the work that The Reading Agency has been developing with Vision Norfolk.

Migration issues – Other Agencies

“Asylum accommodation in the UK”

<https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/asylum-accommodation-in-the-uk/>

(Source: *Migration Observations: the newsletter from the University of Oxford's Migration Observatory*, Apr 2025)

This latest Briefing examines the accommodation of people seeking asylum in the UK:

“The use of contingency accommodation to house asylum seekers has increased significantly since the pandemic. At the end of Q1 2020, only 5% of asylum seekers were housed in contingency accommodation, but by 31 December 2024 over a third were staying in such facilities, mostly hotels [...].”

“The UK's asylum backlog”

https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/the-uks-asylum-backlog/?mc_cid=52a582999a&mc_eid=5bedccdc31

(Source: *Migration Observations: the newsletter from the University of Oxford's Migration Observatory*, Apr 2025)

Updated Briefing:

“The UK's asylum backlog – defined here as the total number of asylum applications awaiting an initial decision – stood at around 91,000 on 31 December 2024. That was 31% lower than the record levels reached in 2022, though still high by historical standards [...] Of those waiting for an initial decision, around 50,000 people (55%) had been waiting for more than six months.

The backlog had increased rapidly between 2019 and 2022, reaching an all-time high of 132,000 applications. It then fell significantly the following year. However, the decline in the backlog slowed considerably in 2024 – in fact, it increased in the third quarter before falling again in the last three months of the year.”

“Exclusive: Government hands private firms £3bn in bid to ‘stop the boats’”

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/beyond-trafficking-and-slavery/exclusive-government-hands-private-firms-3bn-in-bid-to-stop-the-boats/>

(Source: email from openDemocracy, 30 Apr 2025)

“Research reveals the business of Channel security is booming, as companies profit off asylum seekers' desperation”

“Words Matter: Intermediaries, not ‘smuggling gangs’”

https://migrantsrights.org.uk/projects/wordsmatter/intermediaries/?link_id=11&an_id=30e439a67211f81f4bbace156600453a&source=email-x-244&email_referrer=email_2644535&email_subject=say-no-to-the-bill

(Source: Migrants’ Rights Network *Newsletter*, Mar 2025)

Just in case you haven’t seen this:

“The word ‘smuggler’ or ‘gang’ is deliberately designed to inspire fear. Over the last few years, the image of a migrant ‘invasion’, facilitated by the mysterious, ominous ‘smuggler’, has been manufactured to reinforce the idea that migration through criminalised routes is something to be feared.

Instead of using such demonising language, we should be examining why people are forced to turn to intermediaries in the first place. An important part of using the language of intermediaries instead of ‘people smugglers’ is to emphasise that criminalisation is a policy decision, as is the choice by the Government to refer to people who facilitate Channel crossings as ‘people smugglers’. It is a policy decision to force people to use intermediaries to migrate to the UK by criminalising and reducing alternative, safer routes.”

“Statement from Siân Summers-Rees, Chief Officer of City of Sanctuary UK”

<https://cityofsanctuary.org/2025/05/13/statement-from-sian-summers-rees-chief-officer-of-city-of-sanctuary-uk/>

(Source: email from City of Sanctuary, 13 May 2025)

Just in case you haven’t seen this:

“Reflecting on the last two weeks, I am sure I am not alone in feeling an enormous sense of sadness and frustration. Once again, divisive politics has won, further spreading division and giving far-right ideas legitimacy.

Prior to the local government elections, some of our groups and supporting organisations were on the receiving end of unfounded and aggressive social media posts by individuals who are now elected officials. Is this the country we want? This legitimised behaviour is what we expect to see in the countries from which people seeking sanctuary have to flee.

One thing is clear: whatever steps are taken to ‘control migration’, it will never go far enough for those who seek to promote hate and divide our communities. When we treat newcomers as strangers to be feared rather than neighbours to be welcomed, we become strangers to our own values of compassion and fairness.”

LGBTQ+ issues – Other Agencies

“What will the UK Supreme Court gender ruling mean in practice? A legal expert explains”

https://theconversation.com/what-will-the-uk-supreme-court-gender-ruling-mean-in-practice-a-legal-expert-explains-255043?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=The%20Weekender%20-%203353334193&utm_content=The%20Weekender%20-%203353334193+CID_e0407c926a8d694493cedbe5cc2333e0&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=What%20will%20the%20UK%20Supreme%20Court%20gender%20ruling%20mean%20in%20practice%20A%20legal%20expert%20explains

(Source: *The Conversation*, 26 Apr 2025)

This article clarifies – as far as possible at the moment – what the legal position is ... but also points to the unanswered questions.

Broader issues – Other Agencies

“A library is more than a place with books, it is a lifeline”

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cvg117gdky1o?utm_campaign=2807595_Fortnightly%20newsletter%2026%20March%202025%20MEMBER&utm_medium=email&utm_source=The%20Chartered%20Institute%20of%20Library%20and%20Information%20Professionals&dm_i=6WFS,1O6CR,9VBO9,5CA4K,1

(Source: *News from CILIP*, 26 Mar 2025)

Just in case you didn't see this BBC coverage, focusing on the closure of Croydon's Broad Green Library:

“The UK is losing libraries at a rate of about 40 each year, BBC research has found. According to those who depend on them, local libraries are far more than a repository of books - they are community focal points and, for some, a vital lifeline to the outside world. What happens when one closes?”

Fathers' engagement in young children's literacy in 2024

Summary: https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/fathers-engagement-in-young-childrens-literacy-in-2024/?utm_campaign=1279459_Training%20%26%20Resources%20Newsletter%2013%2F05%2F2025&utm_medium=email&utm_source=The%20National%20Literacy%20Trust&dm_i=7RFL,RF8J,3IMFBW,2B0BS,1

Full report:

https://nlt.cdn.ngo/media/documents/Fathers_Engagement_in_Young_Childrens_Literacy_in_2024_s4V3sK7.pdf

(Source: National Literacy Trust *Training & Resources*, Summer 2025)

New report from the NLT, which “[...] revisits and updates what we know about fathers' engagement in their children's early language and literacy.” It notes a “downward trend in daily engagement in activities by both fathers and mothers”, but also identifies covid, the cost-of-living crisis, and cuts to funding for early years activities as possible causes – but still something that we need to monitor and work to reverse

“Rightwing Journalists Are Openly Backing the Guy Who Came up With the ‘Great Replacement’ Theory”

https://novaramedia.com/2025/04/22/rightwing-journalists-are-openly-backing-the-guy-who-came-up-with-the-great-replacement-theory/?utm_source=Novara+Media+Contacts&utm_campaign=ee07a12c35-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2024_11_12_05_57_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-b36eacca19-573848041&mc_cid=ee07a12c35&mc_eid=97a2d6a484&utm_source=Left+Foot+Forward+Newsletter&utm_campaign=e6b71aca53-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2025_04_24_12_35&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-e6b71aca53-358672251&mc_cid=e6b71aca53&mc_eid=e91604b40f

(Source: *Left Foot Forward*, 24 Apr 2025)

Interesting ‘explainer’:

“Last week there was uproar at the Telegraph and GB News when French intellectual Renaud Camus was banned from travelling because the Home Office deemed his presence not conducive to the public good.

If you glanced at the coverage, you might also be outraged – an ‘anti-migration’ philosopher banned from the UK, simply for trying to speak at a conference. What is the world coming to?

However, this description of the event glosses over crucial details which undercut the picture painted by the right-wing media of a harmless old man bullied by the state. In fact, Camus is a far-right philosopher who was planning on attending the conference of a fascist party.”

For info:

“Novara Media is an independent media organisation addressing the issues that are set to define the 21st century, from a crisis of capitalism to racism and climate change.” [taken from:

<https://novaramedia.com/about/>]