

The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 418, 3 June 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/Decolonisation

“Was the Black Lives Matter rebellion all for nothing? It may feel like that, but I have seen reasons for hope”

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/may/24/black-lives-matter-rebellion-2020-reasons-for-hope-edward-colston>

Thoughtful assessment of progress, which ends positively:

“We might lament the lack of true progress in racial justice, but we can be confident that a blueprint for education, resistance and mobilisation has been established by that moment. Next time, and there will be a next time, we will be better primed to go. With the challenge of a surging global right, it will be more urgent than ever to retain focus and not repeat mistakes.”

“Engaging with communities of origin”

https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/features/2025/04/engaging-with-communities-of-origin/#msdyntrid=mFEWUfQsYQINkuGntawY9vUUYgCVngxn_cox5173lzM

(Source: Museums Association email updates, 11 Apr 2025)

Very interesting article about work to start decolonising museums in Aotearoa (New Zealand) and Australia:

“Established museums across Aotearoa and Australia are actively reimagining themselves for a changed bicultural and multicultural reality, investing in capital transformation that enables decolonisation, authentic engagement and cooperation with the communities whose cultures they hold.”

Funding & Opportunities

“Museums Change Lives Awards 2025”

<https://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/museums-change-lives/awards-2025/>

(Source: Museums Association email updates, 23 May 2025)

Now open for nominations – deadline for entries is 5.30pm on 14 July 2025.

Further info:

https://media.museumsassociation.org/app/uploads/2025/05/21095730/HS497-MA-MCL_ENGLISH_04.pdf.

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

“Libraries Unlimited and grassroots groups join forces for region-wide programme backed by the National Lottery”

<https://www.librariesunlimited.org.uk/libraries-unlimited-and-grassroots-groups-join-forces-for-region-wide-programme-backed-by-the-national-lottery/>

(Source: Devon County Council *Weekly round-up*, 23 May 2025)

“Communities across Devon are set to benefit from a major new climate action initiative thanks to £1.5 million in National Lottery funding.

The five-year project – Together for Tomorrow – will be led by Libraries Unlimited, the charity commissioned to run the libraries in Devon and Torbay, in partnership with CAG Devon, a vibrant network of grassroots sustainability groups supported by environmental consultancy Resource Futures, and will involve a wide range of local partners across the region.

Harnessing the power of libraries as trusted, accessible spaces, Together for Tomorrow will support people across the region to take practical, meaningful climate action right on their doorstep.

Running over a five-year period, the programme will support the transformation of these spaces into hubs where local people can take sustainability-focused action: from establishing repair cafés and community fridges to growing schemes, sewing groups and workshops on low-waste living.”

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies

Digital Unite: “Free toolkit to plan a Digital Champion project”

<https://www.digitalunite.com/discover/free-toolkit-plan-digital-champion-project>

(Source: *Digital Unite Newsletter*, Jun 2025)

New free resource – you need to register online to download it:

“This free toolkit will help you plan and structure a Digital Champions Project. It’s based on more than a decade of experience supporting organisations to run projects via the Digital Champions Network (DCN). The DCN provides support and resources for Project Managers, as well as full training to turn staff and volunteers into confident Digital Champions.”

“Opportunity Index Interactive Map”

<https://www.suttontrust.com/opportunity-index-interactive-map/>

(Source: *Digital Unite Newsletter*, Jun 2025)

New from the Sutton Trust, this interactive map gives an at-a-glance checklist for local authority areas:

“Our interactive map allows you to explore access to opportunity for disadvantaged young people in different constituencies across England.

The map is based on our Opportunity Index, which ranks constituencies according to a range of measures, including school attainment, access to higher education, employment status and earnings of young people eligible for free school meals (FSM) at secondary school.”

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

Documenting the HIV and AIDS epidemic: a survey of HIV and AIDS archives in the United Kingdom

<https://www.wsro.org.uk/special-projects/documenting-the-hiv-and-aids-epidemic/survey-report-of-hiv-and-aids-archives-in-the-uk/hiv-and-aids-survey-report/>

(Source: email from Jennifer Mason to archives-nra@jiscmail.ac.uk, 30 May 2025)

“The Documenting the HIV and AIDS Epidemic Project ran from January 2023 to February 2025. Based at West Sussex Record Office in Chichester it was funded by Annabels Foundation. Its aim was to conduct a national survey of HIV and AIDS records of historical value in the United Kingdom, held in public and private hands. The survey sought to bring together information about HIV archives across the country to help inform researchers about collections and how to access them. The project also aimed to identify vulnerable collections and to help safeguard them through the provision of professional advice.” [p3]

“Libraries launch memory bags to help those living with dementia”

https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/news/2025/libraries-launch-memory-bags-help-those-living-dementia?fbclid=IwY2xjawKkG2xleHRuA2FibQlxMQABHnIH4EmuPHzKVRszmITx4aRlaeDOQiCvyoVRZCrgAD0rAkTls-aO1-DD9nwn_aem_sJaK01FFTrMVUE1UgM1ulw&sfnsn=scwspmo

News release from North Yorkshire Council:

“Memory bags are now available to pick up from libraries across North Yorkshire, which include items, books, and activities for individuals or groups to improve their quality of life.

The bags and their contents aim to promote conversations between people with memory loss as well as their family and friends.

The bags contain a selection of books from the Reading Well dementia collection, jigsaws, and sensory items such as fidget toys and scents.

They also include tactile-themed items such as gardening gloves, a gym towel and bean bags, and items to reminisce over such as seaside posters and sport programmes.”

Neurodiversity issues – Other Agencies

“We need to have a greater awareness of autism in older people’s services”

<https://www.nursingtimes.net/older-peoples-nursing/we-need-to-have-a-greater-awareness-of-autism-in-older-peoples-services-19-05-2025/>

(Source: *Later Life AGenda*, 20 May 2025)

Important article from *Nursing Times*:

“It is estimated that in England alone there are 150,000 to 500,000 people aged 20 to 49 who are autistic, but undiagnosed [...] These numbers rise to 250,000 to 600,000 for people aged 50 and over.

A significant proportion of these undiagnosed older people are likely to be in hospitals or care homes or receiving help at home.”

Migration issues – Other Agencies

“Starmer says migrants should speak English – but all of the UK’s languages are important for integration”

https://theconversation.com/starmer-says-migrants-should-speak-english-but-all-of-the-uks-languages-are-important-for-integration-255286?utm_medium=article_native_share&utm_source=theconversation.com

(Source: *The Conversation*, 20 May 2025)

Important article about languages in the UK:

“When Keir Starmer said: ‘If you want to live in the UK, you should speak English’, it laid bare an assumption – that English is the only language that counts in the UK.

This view not only overlooks the UK’s rich linguistic diversity, but also runs counter to the language policies being developed across the devolved nations.

While the UK government’s latest proposals on immigration treat English proficiency as the main pathway to integration, governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are taking different approaches.”

“Uncensored: Hong Kong stories of courage”

https://www.amnesty.org.uk/uncensored?utm_content=162136&utm_campaign=MEMA6103S_UPT_HK_CensorshipProjectLaunch&utm_medium=email&utm_source=amnestyuk

(Source: email from Amnesty International, 22 May 2025)

“This collection gathers the voices of Hong Kong creatives who have been censored, suppressed, or silenced – but not erased. In their chosen mediums, they resist forgetting, illuminating truths that repression seeks to erase. What you’ll find here are not just testimonies – they are acts of resistance.”

A migrant’s guide: an interactive guide to support you through your immigration journey in the UK

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d91f87725049149378fce82/t/682af5f8449f221f4c761027/1747645950424/Praxis%2B-%2BA%2BMigrant%2BGuide%2BFINAL%2BDIGITAL%2Bv2-compressed.pdf>

(Source: *Free Movement Weekly Newsletter*, 2 Jun 2025)

New from Praxis:

“The aim of this guide is to help you access services, build community, and take care of yourself before and after securing immigration status. It

has been co-produced by people who have lived experience of navigating the complex immigration system in the UK.” [p2]

The guide is also available in Amharic, Arabic, Bengali, Farsi, Pashto and Spanish.

Info about ordering multiple copies (charged-for) is at:

https://www.praxis.org.uk/migrants-guide?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_term=Tue+03+Jun+2025&utm_campaign=Free+Movement+Weekly+Newsletter.

LGBTQ+ issues – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

“Museums join forces in trans inclusion partnership”

https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/2025/05/museums-join-forces-in-trans-inclusion-partnership/#msdyntrid=x1mdB05gFkfwf6u50eyRu7XIZrr56_k67wpGcDIRJI

(Source: Museums Association email updates, 23 May 2025)

“The University of Leicester’s Research Centre for Museums and Galleries (RCMG) has announced a partnership with museums, galleries and heritage organisations to advance trans inclusion in the culture sector.

Supported by Art Fund, the partners will work with experts in trans-inclusion, equalities law and ethics to develop new guidance and practical resources for the UK’s culture sector that will be launched in 2026.”

LGBTQ+ issues – Other Agencies

Trans Rights Index & Map 2025 – trans rights at the tipping point: Europe’s 2025 struggle for self-determination

<https://tgeu.org/trans-rights-index-map-2025/>

(Source: email from Queer AF, 17 May 2025)

The latest Index:

“[...] reveals an unprecedented reversal: for the first time in its 13-year history, setbacks in human rights of trans people across Europe and Central Asia now clearly outweigh progress. This regression signals more than just a crisis for trans communities — it is a broader crisis of democracy and fundamental rights across the region [...]

Trans people – particularly trans people further marginalised by race, class, disability, migration, HIV status and other intersecting lived experiences – are seeing their human rights protections and fundamental freedoms stripped away at an aggressive pace. For instance, anti-discrimination protections have been rolled back in Georgia and Hungary, where governments introduced anti-trans and anti-LGBTI constitutional amendments.”

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

Cultural Learning Alliance. *Report Card 2025*

https://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/CLA-2025-Report-Card_AW.pdf

(Source: Cultural Learning Alliance *Latest News*, May 2025)

“This is CLA’s second annual Report Card and distils CLA’s evidence work and reporting into a clear set of five annual indicators, based – as far as possible – on national time series data drawn from government data sets.” [p2]

Key findings can be summarised as:

- Poverty and Arts take-up:

“There is a clear relationship between the poverty of an area and pupils in that area not studying the Expressive Arts in school. Expressive Arts take up at GCSE and A Level is lowest in regions and local authorities with the highest level of free school meals and highest levels of deprivation. There is a clear socioeconomic disparity in young people’s study of the Arts at both GCSE and A Level: we call this an ‘Arts entitlement gap’.” [p8]

- “Recruitment to Initial Teacher Training for Expressive Arts subjects is in crisis” [p8]
- “We are still largely seeing a trajectory of Arts decline in secondary education” [p8]