

The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 425, 9 October 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

“Racism isn’t innate – here are five psychological stages that may lead to it”

https://theconversation.com/racism-isnt-innate-here-are-five-psychological-stages-that-may-lead-to-it-264391?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20September%2016%202025%20-%203517235847&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20September%2016%202025%20-%203517235847+CID_438d60e73bebd77b2d2a89402ffb3b0c&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=Racism%20isnt%20innate%20%20here%20are%20five%20psychological%20stages%20that%20may%20lead%20to%20it

(Source: *The Conversation*, 16 Sep 2025)

Interesting article which argues that some of the theories about what causes racism may not be correct ... and suggesting a five-stage process, starting with “[...] when a person lacks a sense of security and identity, which generates a desire to affiliate themselves with a group. This affiliation strengthens their identity and provides a sense of belonging.”

The article suggests that we need to pay more attention to people who feel insecure and unsupported.

Funding & Opportunities

“National Lottery Project Grants Reopening”

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/applying-funding-us>

(Source: *Museum Development North Newsletter*, 3 Oct 2025)

“The **£30,000 and under** and **£30,001 to £100,000** strands of National Lottery Project Grants programme are both now open for applications. You can find all the information and guidance on how to make an application in our [National Lottery Project Grants Guidance Library](#).”

Press release: “Six regions receive £25 million to bolster creative industries”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/six-regions-receive-25-million-to-bolster-creative-industries>

(Source: *Heritage Update*, 553, 2 Oct 2025)

Just in case you haven’t seen this:

“Six UK regions with strengths in creative industries such as film and TV, music, fashion and video games have been awarded £25 million each to grow these sectors as part of the Government’s Creative Places Growth Fund.

The fund was announced in the Creative Industries Sector Plan in June, as part of the Industrial Strategy, where the Government shared their intention to invest £150 million in the creative industries of six regions outside of London - Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region, North East, West of England, West Midlands and West Yorkshire.”

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

“Why summer can be more dangerous than winter for people sleeping rough in London”

<https://www.itv.com/news/london/2025-08-13/why-summer-can-be-more-dangerous-than-winter-for-people-sleeping-rough-in-london>

(Source: email from Museum of Homelessness, 1 Sep 2025)

“While a lot of people are relishing the rising temperatures brought to London by the fourth heatwave of the year, people sleeping rough are struggling.

Being homeless in extreme heat can be as dangerous as cold weather and can kill.

The limited access to resources, increased exposure to heat, and underlying health conditions makes homeless individuals vulnerable to hot weather.

The Museum of Homelessness, based in Finsbury Park, has documented the date of death of homeless people across the UK and found an increase during hotter months.

The months of May and August show the highest numbers of deaths.”

Cost of living crisis/poverty – Other Agencies

The Youth Guarantee and the benefits system: challenges, opportunities, and changes needed

https://learningandwork.org.uk/resources/research-and-reports/the-youth-guarantee-and-the-benefits-system/?mptk=facfc5d238619b5c5ca0c3b37bcad4fc1d6248e4d475966856644ba51a908226e7266acd889e12c294fa44abf2692ba1_fe44ccb169e0986f8bd845864978fe04

(Source: email from the Learning and Work Institute, 11 Sep 2025)

Important critique of the current system.

“Headline”:

“Around 837,000 young people in England are not in education, employment or training (NEET), up nearly 20% since the pandemic, risking harm to their career prospects and the economic prosperity of the country. Around 250,000 young people who claim Universal Credit (UC) are looking for work but need better support. However, nearly 200,000 are claiming benefits but assessed as too ill to work. These young people

have little or no contact with Jobcentre Plus or wider help and should be offered extended support if they want it.” [Taken from: https://learningandwork.org.uk/resources/research-and-reports/the-youth-guarantee-and-the-benefits-system/?mptk=19bb54fb6049db5bc03f89dca58b6fd855be33e5cfcee570fcb8e229c0ccb19b34a1ac6a78a8fb5fc3772d8c6857af8a_52973638ab6774059249d9f8fdb9724d]

From the report itself:

“The benefits system will play an important role in the success of the Youth Guarantee. However, the current system presents challenges for effective implementation and does not always effectively support young people. Young people can have negative experiences and perceptions of claiming benefits and support from Jobcentre Plus work coaches. Jobcentre Plus faces challenges of high staff turnover meaning young benefits claimants do not always have consistency in who provides them with support, and trust that has been built is lost when a new work coach is assigned. High caseloads can mean that work coaches do not have the time they need to provide tailored, person-centred support to young benefits claimants. There is not always effective cross-departmental working between the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), who are responsible for the benefits system, and other central government departments, local governments, and the voluntary and community sector posing challenges around accountability and efficiency within the system. If these challenges are not addressed, they will hold back the effectiveness of the Youth Guarantee.” [p6]

Equality, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion – Other Agencies Reparations

https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/61488f992b58e687f1108c7c/68c1f44bb24c8a2855de5309_RUNNYM_EDE%2BTRUST_REPARATIONS%2BREPORT_FINAL-compressed.pdf

(Source: email from the Runnymede Trust, 11 Sep 2025)

Important and wide-ranging new report:

“This report reminds us that reparations are not just about historical accountability – they are about recognising the structures and systems that still shape economic injustice today [...] the legacy of racial capitalism continues to entrench death-dealing inequalities that disproportionately affect communities of African and Caribbean heritage. From decaying housing to over-policing and underfunded schools, the debt is visible in everyday life.

These social problems disproportionately impact communities of colour in the UK, but it is also important to note that these issues are a shared experience across working-class communities of all ethnicities, including the white working class. The benefit of interrogating and addressing these issues is not one that exclusively accrues to Black Caribbean and

African people: it potentially has much wider social application. Understanding reparations requires us to confront the exploitation that underpins our current economic system which locks working-class communities into increasingly precarious economic and social positions.”
[p12]

Diversity in books and other materials for children & young people

“What to read with your baby (and why it matters!)”

https://www.inclusivebooksforchildren.org/blog/what-to-read-with-my-baby-and-why-it-matters?utm_source=Klaviyo&utm_medium=email&kx=TsA_i8KotcpmEZZ5yGuK5JrXEIzYjiPVm_E4I7rzuFc.WQjvCN

(Source: email from Inclusive Books for Children, 18 Sep 2025)

New blogpost by Liz Pemberton (The Black Nursery Manager), recommending “[...] tried and trusted suggestions of books to read with your baby or toddler and when to introduce them [...]”

“Books about starting school”

https://www.inclusivebooksforchildren.org/collections/books-about-starting-school?utm_source=Klaviyo&utm_medium=email&kx=TsA_i8KotcpmEZZ5yGuK5JrXEIzYjiPVm_E4I7rzuFc.WQjvCN

(Source: email from Inclusive Books for Children, 18 Sep 2025)

“This wide-ranging selection of school-themed titles includes picture books and chapter books suited to different ages, from 1 to 11.”

Health & Wellbeing issues – Other Agencies

“Lifetime trends in happiness change as misery peaks among the young – new research”

https://theconversation.com/lifetime-trends-in-happiness-change-as-misery-peaks-among-the-young-new-research-263665?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20September%201%202025%20-%203502835690&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20September%201%202025%20-%203502835690+CID_06dcaf0608e3005559917a3631ee4ce8&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=Lifetime%20trends%20in%20happiness%20change%20as%20misery%20peaks%20among%20the%20young%20%20new%20research

(Source: *The Conversation*, 2 Sep 2025)

Important summary of recent research, which concludes:

“Although the causes of the changes we describe have yet to be fully understood, it would be prudent for policymakers to place the issue of rising despair among young people at the heart of any wellbeing strategy.”

Accessibility issues – Other Agencies

Bold, clear, sensory and strong: creating accessible picture books

<https://mykindofbook.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/MKoB-Bold-Clear-Sensory-Strong-report.pdf>

Just in case you haven't seen this report from My Kind of Book – it looks at the accessibility of picture books, reflecting on the views of teachers in special schools and units who:

“[...] told us that they are frustrated with the choice of picture books available to their pupils and that they spend considerable time and energy adapting books to make them engaging for their pupils. At the same time, the participating teachers and parents shared rich descriptions of what they want to see in accessible picture books.” [p2]

“My Kind of Book creates and promotes inclusive books and sensory stories for people with additional needs and works to make picture books more accessible for everyone.” See: <https://mykindofbook.org.uk/>.

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

Autism issues – Other Agencies

“Why it's time to rethink the notion of an autism ‘spectrum’”

https://theconversation.com/why-its-time-to-rethink-the-notion-of-an-autism-spectrum-263243?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20October%202%202025%20-%203536736053&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20October%202%202025%20-%203536736053+CID_f611269a1d2efcb2d7818f649fb0ea8c&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=Why%20its%20time%20to%20rethink%20the%20notion%20of%20an%20autism%20spectrum

(Source: *The Conversation*, 3 Oct 2025)

Important new article which concludes:

“Language will never capture every nuance, but words shape how society treats autistic people. Moving away from the idea of a single spectrum could be a step towards recognising autism in all its diversity and valuing autistic people as they are.”

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

“Refuge: Codifying Refugee Participation”

<https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/refuge/>

(Source: Museums Association email updates, 12 Sep 2025)

“[...] this project offers practical guidance for galleries, museums and other cultural and academic institutions on working with refugees, asylum seekers, and forcibly displaced individuals.

Drawing on critical research from the University of Sussex, it explores how civic and cultural institutions can foster meaningful participation, voice, and recognition in a context where official support is shrinking. The work includes best practice guidelines, case studies, and resources developed through two national workshops in Manchester and London with cultural professionals, academics, and individuals with lived experience of displacement, project managers, curators, and community engagement teams.

The ultimate aim of this project is to synthesise experiences, recommendations and reflections from cultural organisations across the UK, and to codify best practices for cultural institutions engaging in participatory work.”

The case studies/resources (see: <https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/refuge/resources/>) are particularly useful, and the section on “Codifying Museum Practices” (<https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/refuge/codifying-museum-practices/>) is also a valuable outline of the key principles we need to employ.

The section, “Critical Reflections” (see: <https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/refuge/critical-reflections/>), looks at important issues, such as funding, the fear of “getting it wrong”, the need for real engagement by leaders and senior managers.

Finally there is a “Calls to Action” section (<https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/refuge/calls-to-action/>) which includes lots of good practical steps that need to be taken – but, sadly, does not include City of Sanctuary as an example.

Migration issues – Other Agencies

“The most radical part of Reform’s deportation plans”

https://theconversation.com/the-most-radical-part-of-reforms-deportation-plans-264162?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20August%2030%202025%20-%203501835679&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20August%2030%202025%20-%203501835679+CID_60b46bbc765e5b5e7094f351d239b461&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=The%20most%20radical%20part%20of%20Reforms%20deportation%20plans

(Source: *The Conversation*, 1 Sep 2025)

Interesting post from The Migration Observatory, which concludes:

“However, the most significant part of Reform’s announcement is not the detail, but the essence. It proposes ending the principle of refugee protection – accepting that people would be sent to countries where they could be tortured or killed, as a means of reducing unauthorised migration and cutting the costs of the asylum system.”

“Why planning must be part of the asylum debate”

<https://newstartmag.co.uk/articles/why-planning-must-be-part-of-the-asylum-debate/>

(Source: *New Start*, 5 Sep 2025)

Interesting article arguing that planners need to be involved in the discussion about housing new arrivals:

“Planning also brings something more intangible but equally important: perspective. Planners are trained to think spatially and strategically. They analyse demographic change, land supply, infrastructure capacity and social impact. They weigh up how uses interact, and how best to achieve balance between communities.

This kind of thinking is urgently needed. The asylum housing crisis has often been managed reactively, with temporary fixes that trigger resentment and undermine trust. The absence of planning voices in the debate means we are missing the profession most able to mediate between central government directives and local realities.”

“Why people displaced by conflict are particularly vulnerable to climate risks”

https://theconversation.com/why-people-displaced-by-conflict-are-particularly-vulnerable-to-climate-risks-264647?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20September%2010%202025%20-%203511435786&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20September%2010%202025%20-%203511435786+CID_fd739e25b7a988b89b0b4e5f707ab44a&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=Why%20people%20displaced%20by%20conflict%20are%20particularly%20vulnerable%20to%20climate%20risks

(Source: *The Conversation*, 10 Sep 2025)

Important background article which concludes:

“Reducing the vulnerability of displaced people to climate change and related extreme weather is no easy task. It will require decision-makers – humanitarian and development aid workers, government officials and local city planners – to listen and learn from what local populations are already doing to adapt and build their own resilience.

Indigenous knowledge has a huge role to play. But people who have just moved to a new area may not know about – or be capable of making – the same adaptations as people who have lived there for generations.

There are also limits to individual adaptation, of course. Displaced people need to be included in any disaster risk reduction or risk management efforts, as well as in national adaptation plans.”

“My work in the hotel that was attacked”

https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/stay-informed/stories/my-work-in-the-hotel-that-was-attacked/?fbclid=IwY2xjawMuNU9leHRuA2FlbQIxMABicmlkETFUcG5xM0NmMXdLWm1OV0M3AR6FrM9silw-jKeTA-mWzUKH7xeqM-zqt14BUMEZosR2PYvOk2zmAaxl3caLA_aem_X31l_aIVGAZaqmOPpuelcQ

Just in case you haven't seen this first-hand account:

“Caroline worked in an asylum hotel which was targeted in the riots. She talks about that shocking day, in summer 2024, and how her work has changed since.”

Broader issues – Other Agencies

“Why listening to stories and talking about them is so important for young children”

https://theconversation.com/why-listening-to-stories-and-talking-about-them-is-so-important-for-young-children-249302?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20September%2010%202025%20-%203511435786&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20September%2010%202025%20-%203511435786+CID_fd739e25b7a988b89b0b4e5f707ab44a&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=Why%20listening%20to%20stories%20and%20talking%20about%20them%20is%20so%20important%20for%20young%20children

(Source: *The Conversation*, 10 Sep 2025)

Interesting article, drawing on findings from the TWiTCH (Talk With Tales for Children) project – see: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/twitch-talk-with-tales-for-children-2023-24-pilot>.

Press release: “Councils spending tens of millions a year in ‘private landlord incentives’”

<https://www.generationrent.org/2025/09/01/councils-spending-tens-of-millions-a-year-in-private-landlord-incentives-press-release/>

(Source: email from Generation Rent, 9 Sep 2025)

An area of expenditure that doesn't hit the headlines – and Generation Rent also say:

“Generation Rent's analysis estimated that the collective money spent by all councils who responded could have funded 116 public libraries for a year. Previous analysis from the BBC found that there was a net loss of 150 public libraries in England between 2016 and 2023.”