

The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 434, 20 April 2026

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

“Black writers’ books pulled from UK school library amid censorship row as author speaks out”

<https://www.blackcurrentnews.co.uk/p/nova-reid-black-authors-books-removed-uk-school>

Important addition to the coverage of this story:

“An author whose work was reportedly removed from a school library has spoken out, warning that the targeting of books by Black writers risks fuelling ‘cultural ignorance’ and erasing vital perspectives.

Nova Reid told *Black Current News* that she felt ‘agitated, but not surprised’ after learning her book *The Good Ally* had been singled out in a wider removal of titles from Manchester school The Lowry Academy.”

Palestine and Israel

“Current events in Israel and Palestine”

<https://www.archives.org.uk/news/current-events-in-israel-and-palestine>

(Source: email from Deborah Mason, ARA to archives-nra@jiscmail.ac.uk, 14 Apr 2026)

There has been a lot of discussion on the ARCHIVES-NRA@JISCMail.AC.UK list recently about responses to the destruction of buildings, objects and records in Gaza, and the ARA have just helpfully updated and reissued their statement – it includes:

“ARA unequivocally condemns the targeting of civilians, human rights abuses and war crimes as well as attacks on cultural assets and cultural infrastructure. Where we have the means to do so, we will support efforts to uphold international law and secure peace. This applies to all wars and armed conflicts.

Our previous statement on the war in Gaza still stands and we continue to support statements made by Blue Shield, ICA and others on this conflict and others.”

“What's happening in the West Bank?”

https://www.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam-in-action/current-emergencies/whats-happening-in-the-west-bank/?utm_source=sfmc&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=%5b3%5d+SE_CN+Red+Line+for+Palestine+Launch_B_150426_701P700000gWVdGIAW&utm_content=ReadStory_EmailBody_YesEngagement_Gaza&utm_source=sfmc_journey&utm_term=ReadStory_EmailBody_YesEngagement_Gaza&utm_content=588778&utm_id=7cc66f09-7e2a-4cdb-97fc-57377dbf4bbd&sfmc_activityid=2cccfeab-0b85-4363-b9e3-

[0158216478f9&utm_medium=email&sfmc_journey_id=7cc66f09-7e2a-4cdb-97fc-57377dbf4bbd&sfmc_journey_name=ESC_Me](https://www.oxfam.org.uk/press-releases/oxfam-have-just-put-together-a-briefing-with-everything-you-need-to-know-about-what-s-happening-in-the-west-bank)

Oxfam have just put together a briefing with “everything you need to know about what’s happening in the West Bank.”

National Year of Reading 2026

“Putting Libraries and Reading at the Heart of Council Priorities”

https://dcmslibraries.blog.gov.uk/2026/03/20/putting-libraries-and-reading-at-the-heart-of-council-priorities/?utm_source=Community+Managed+Libraries+National+Peer+Network&utm_campaign=641cbe9312-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2025_12_22_12_15_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-5411f3f272-325855371

(Source: Community Libraries Network *Newsletter*, Apr 2026)

Just in case you haven’t seen this:

“2026 is The National Year of Reading! This UK-wide campaign is designed to inspire more people to make reading a regular part of their lives.

Public libraries play a crucial role in promoting reading for pleasure and will continue to do so throughout this year.

Today we’re shining a spotlight on the work The Reading Agency (which is supporting public library engagement during the NYR) is doing in partnership with local authorities to develop local reading strategies.”

Funding & Opportunities

Museums Change Lives Awards

https://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/museums-change-lives/awards-2026/#msdynmkt_trackingcontext=f3dc5c65-1c2b-45b4-b9d7-eaf1a9ed0000

(Source: Museums Association email updates, 14 Apr 2026)

The Awards are now open for nomination.

“The deadline for all entries is **9.00am on Monday 29 June 2026**. Shortlists for each of the awards will be announced in September 2026.”

Climate emergency/the environment – Other Agencies

Exploring everyday microplastic exposures: recent evidence of products delivering microplastic to humans

https://www.plasticsoupfoundation.org/rapporten/2026_HLP_MPEverydayExposureSummary.pdf

(Source: *Public Sector News*, 15 Apr 2026)

Important alert, especially about 3D printers:

“While much public attention has focused on microplastics in seafood and bottled water, the report highlights that indoor air can be significantly more polluted than outdoor air. Humans breathe roughly six litres of air

per minute, giving airborne particles direct access to the nose, throat and lungs.

The report highlights how encased in plastic the modern indoor environment is, with paint, PVC flooring, carpets, synthetic curtains and upholstery all continuously shedding microscopic fragments.

One striking finding involves 3D printers, now common in schools and libraries. The review notes that printing with ABS plastic can release between 2 billion and 4 billion nanoplastics per second into a room's air.

Other studies cited found that simply wearing a polyester garment for 20 minutes of normal activity released over 300 microplastic fibers per gram of fabric." [Taken from email]

Disability issues – Other Agencies

“SignHealth online space for deaf young people”

https://deafwave.signhealth.org.uk/?utm_source=Equally%20Ours%20Newsletter%202025&utm_campaign=285ee0bebb-Newsletter%20February%2011%202025_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_93cf2d2bcb-285ee0bebb-120687778

(Source: *Equally Ours Newsletter*, Apr 2026)

“SignHealth has co-created Deaf Wave, a new online space to support the health and wellbeing of deaf young people. The website was co-created with deaf young people and is a place to find wellbeing information, tips and stories in both BSL and English.” [Taken from the *Newsletter*]

Info about SignHealth at:

https://signhealth.org.uk/?utm_source=Equally%20Ours%20Newsletter%202025&utm_campaign=285ee0bebb-Newsletter%20February%2011%202025_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_93cf2d2bcb-285ee0bebb-120687778.

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

“Autism Acceptance, Belonging, and Inclusion at Work Is Just Good Workplace Design”

https://librarianbyday.net/2026/04/03/autism-acceptance-belonging-and-inclusion-at-work-is-just-good-workplace-design/?utm_campaign=6081775_Copy%20of%20Fortnightly%208%20April%202026%20-%20Member&utm_medium=email&utm_source=The%20Chartered%20Institute%20of%20Library%20and%20%20Information%20Professionals&dm_i=6WFS,3MCQ7,9VBO9,9R6IJ,1,0,0,0

(Source: *News from CILIP*, 8 Apr 2026)

Helpful article:

“We tend to treat autism acceptance, and neurodiversity more broadly, as something separate from the rest of our work. It becomes a program, a training, or a hiring initiative. Something we add on rather than something we build into how work functions. But when you look at what meaningful acceptance requires, it starts to look a lot like good communication practice in general. It looks like clear expectations, thoughtful communication, flexibility, and environments that make it easier for people to do their jobs.”

Migration issues – Other Agencies

“I was a child asylum seeker treated as an adult. The Home Office is inhumane”

https://inews.co.uk/opinion/child-asylum-seeker-home-office-is-inhumane-4085205?fbclid=IwY2xjawRDFYxleHRuA2FibQlxMQBicmlkETFTeXI3RjQ2QIVaMEY2eDE3c3J0YwZhcHBfaWQQMjlyMDM5MTc4ODlwMDg5MgABHrm5vEcZyAJl61rBg18mFyiT9uYIEYZH51oUA7aJda2vuxH352yGH_ABvpDm_aem_c7r6VP0sfFduA5uAmcU6XQ

(via Facebook)

Opinion piece by writer and activist Gulwali Passarlay:

“When people ask whether the Home Office is ‘unfair’ to asylum seekers, I often think it is the wrong question. The real issue is the inhumanity of it — and the result is not just in policy outcomes, but fear, trauma and harm on the streets.

I know this because I have lived it. I have been through the UK’s asylum process and I am still living with its consequences.”

“More than 50 young asylum seekers have died in UK since 2015, data shows”

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2026/apr/08/young-asylum-seekers-deaths-suicides-uk>

Just in case you didn’t see this *Guardian* article which highlights a major issue:

“Of 54 deaths of unaccompanied children and young people who claimed asylum between 2015 and 2024 in the care system, 31 were suicides, seven were homicides and eight were fatal accidents. Six deaths were due to health issues and in two cases the cause of death was unknown.”

The information is drawn from a report, *Deaths of unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people in the care of, or supported by, local authorities: an investigation*,

https://www.daaroyouth.org.uk/files/uqgd/27a6c3_d50e7e81a9664c708997089ef4e564c3.pdf.

The report was produced by the Da’aro Youth Project, based in South London – see: <https://www.daaroyouth.org.uk/>.

“They singled out non-white, foreign-born workers’: the restaurants raided by Britain’s version of ICE”

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2026/mar/24/restaurants-raided-britain-version-ice-immigration>

Coverage of the UK version of ICE:

“They’re not armed and they keep a relatively low profile. But the Home Office’s immigration compliance and enforcement officers have searched thousands of business [sic] in pursuit of illegal workers. Are they abusing their powers?”

2025 impact [City of Sanctuary impact report]

<https://cdn-e2wra3va3xhgzx.cityofsanctuary.org/uploads/2026/03/2025-CoS-Impact-Report.pdf>

(Source: email from City of Sanctuary, 14 Apr 2026)

“City of Sanctuary UK, the umbrella organisation for the City of Sanctuary movement, works to grow and sustain welcome, support and opportunity for people seeking sanctuary across the UK. This report shares some of the highlights from a year of collective action and progress.

This year the movement has continued to grow in strength, reach and impact, despite significant challenges. The summer of 2025 saw renewed rioting, with racialised communities increasingly targeted, along with the organisations who support them – City of Sanctuary UK was the subject of a concerted misinformation campaign. In this context, the commitment and resilience shown by our networks has been more important than ever.

In 2025, membership of City of Sanctuary UK grew to 1,560 organisations, a 22% increase on the previous year.

At the same time, 225 organisations across the UK received the Sanctuary Award – a 35% increase on 2024 – demonstrating a growing commitment from institutions to create welcoming, inclusive spaces for people seeking sanctuary.2 [p2]

LGBTQ+ issues – Other Agencies

“What Would Have Helped Me As a Queer Person at School”

<https://www.popnolly.com/post/what-would-have-helped-me-as-a-queer-person-at-school>

(Source: LinkedIn)

Important blogpost:

“In a recent school talk I gave to a class of Year 9s, I was telling my story of growing up queer and in the Q&A section one of them asked a very interesting question: If I were their age now, do I think I would have come out? [...]”

My experience with the Year 9 class, and working with younger children in my day job, has allowed me to reflect on some of the things my school could have done to help me as a queer person, which I want to share here...”

“Supreme Court Decision one year on – 365 days of confusion, gaslighting, and fear”

<https://www.wearequeer.af.com/the-supreme-court-decision-one-year-on-365-days-of-confusion-gaslighting-and-fear/?ref=queer.af-newsletter>

(Source: email from Queer AF, 18 Spr 2026)

This is a helpful explainer (as well as a grim reminder of how trans lives have become some kind of political football):

“One year ago today, the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom declared that, in its legal opinion, the definition of a woman under the Equality Act 2010 is restricted exclusively to what it calls ‘biological women’ [...]

365 days later, the ruling has solved nothing. A ruling that was designed to provide legal clarity has, according to an array of barristers, legal experts, and human rights lawyers, left service providers more confused than ever – and trans people more vulnerable than ever.”

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

“Censorship in School Libraries: Information and Practical Support from the SLA”

https://www.sla.org.uk/Public/News/Articles/2026/censorship_2026.aspx

(Source: School Library Association *Monthly Newsletter*, Apr 2026)

The SLA has drawn together recent coverage in this very helpful round-up.