

The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 435, 11 May 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

Keeping us safe: rethinking policing, harm and justice

Web summary: <https://www.runnymedetrust.org/publications/keeping-us-safe-rethinking-policing-harm-and-justice>

Full report: https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/61488f992b58e687f1108c7c/69e89eb93a5178263852e55e_Keeping%20Us%20Safe_Full%20Report.pdf

Short version: https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/61488f992b58e687f1108c7c/69e1025d0128057c2e06fbd0_Keeping%20Us%20Safe_Short%20Read.pdf

(Source: email from the Runnymede Trust, 20 Apr 2026)

Important new report from the Runnymede Trust:

“This report not only explores the negligible positive impact of carceral approaches: it also examines how independent inquiries and police reforms have failed to address institutional racism. Training and diversity initiatives individualise the issue, and attempts to improve trust ignore how racialised harm is inherent to the police.

Keeping us safe therefore requires us to challenge the assumption that policing is an inevitability and instead push for a societal reorientation towards harm prevention. Taking public support for ‘tough on crime’ measures at face value misses vital context, disregarding how public opinion is shaped and an evidence base that does not support these measures.

Our research also finds widespread support for social interventions and non-policing approaches to safety and harm reduction.” [Full report, p11]

Cost of living crisis/poverty/NEET – Other Agencies

Turning the tide on rising NEETS: how young people are falling out of education, employment or training and how to help them find their way back

https://ik.imagekit.io/centreforyounglives/Reports/Turning%20the%20tide%20on%20rising%20NEETS_REPORT.pdf?updatedAt=1776847787233

(Source: Children & Young People Now, 24 Apr 2026)

Important new report from the Centre for Young Lives. It identifies who currently is NEET:

“As of the end of 2025, there were almost one million young NEETs – 957,000, or 12.8% of the population of 16–24-year-olds. The cohort of young NEETs is increasingly defined by economic inactivity rather than unemployment. A majority (57%) are inactive, with around 547,000

young people not seeking work, while a smaller but still significant group (411,000) are unemployed.

Driving this trend in economic inactivity is young people out of work due to long term sickness or poor health, with 28% of all NEETs in this category. Mental health is a major driver, affecting around one in five. While young men are more likely to NEET overall, and more likely to be unemployed – in recent months increasing numbers of young women unemployed or inactive have been continuing to close the gender gap. Young women also make up the majority of the economically inactive cohort.” [p11]

It then goes on to look at how the current system is failing these young people, and identifies potential solutions:

“At present, we stand at a crucial turning point. Recent Government commitments signal hope in turning the tide on rising NEETs and being more ambitious about their future prospects. This moment must be seized upon, and requires buy-in from cross-government, from local partners, employers and the education system.” [p14]

These are worth looking at, although, sadly, it doesn't mention the NYR or libraries or museums.

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

“Addressing the Attendance and Benefit Gap”

<https://museumattendance.le.ac.uk/>

(Source: Research Centre for Museums and Galleries (RCMG) *Newsletter* #013, May 2026)

“This four-year (2026-2030) research project is funded by the AHRC and led by the Research Centre for Museums & Galleries (RCMG) at the University of Leicester, in partnership with Birmingham Museums Trust. Museum visiting directly reflects the broad socioeconomic inequalities prevalent in society. Forging a new research and implementation paradigm, this project will, for the first time, enable Museums and Heritage Institutions (MHIs) to deepen their contribution to society by understanding how they can close the gap in who visits – and hence who benefits from – museums, galleries and heritage.”

“National study aims to break down barriers to volunteering in heritage and nature sectors”

<https://www.york.ac.uk/news-and-events/news/2026/research/inclusive-volunteering/>

(Source: *Heritage Update*, 567, 30 Apr 2026)

“The University of York has partnered with some of the country's leading museums and heritage organisations to help people from diverse backgrounds access volunteering opportunities [...]

Many museums cannot operate without volunteers, who play an important role in their communities. The research will investigate how these organisations can set up inclusive volunteering programmes which benefit people, organisations and wider society in a sector which has traditionally relied on a narrow demographic.”

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies

“We need a whole system shift to support white working-class girls”

https://www.cypnow.co.uk/content/comment/we-need-a-whole-system-shift-to-support-white-working-class-girls?utm_campaign=Update%20bulletin%2022%2F04%2F26&utm_content=&utm_term=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cypnow.co.uk%2Fcontent%2Fcomment%2Fwe-need-a-whole-system-shift-to-support-white-working-class-girls&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Children%20%26%20Young%20People%20Now

(Source: Children & Young People Now *Update*, 22 Apr 2026)

“Michael Cater of Character Education Trust explains what needs to be done to tackle the growing issue of academic underachievement and economic inactivity among white working-class girls.”

“The Character Education Trust is a multi-academy trust (MAT) that exists to provide outstanding education in both primary and secondary schools in Kent.”
[Taken from: <https://www.charactereducationtrust.org/the-character-education-trust/>]

Diversity in books and other materials for children & young people

“2027 submissions: IBBY UK Outstanding Books For Young People With Disabilities”

<https://booksforkeeps.co.uk/2027-submissions-ibby-uk-outstanding-books-for-young-people-with-disabilities/>

(Source: email from *Books for Keeps*, 19 Apr 2026)

“**IBBY UK** has revealed the books submitted for consideration for the 2027 **Outstanding Books For Young People With Disabilities**. A record number of submissions were received this year, and **IBBY UK** commented on the thoughtful progress publishers have made in this area, while encouraging more publishing in different formats.

Eleven books [...] have been submitted for consideration for the 2027 list. These show a wide range of disabilities and backgrounds and provide authentic, respectful representations and reflect the growing numbers of ‘own voice’ and ‘lived experience’ books. Several are from small publishers who have collaborated with agencies and family groups to develop and test their ideas. Mental health is well-represented in this list, as validating mental health struggles through fiction is vital in increasing understanding and tolerance. The two non-fiction titles, both written by disabled authors and focusing on the experience of physical disability, are important contributions.” [emphases theirs]

Health & Wellbeing issues – Other Agencies

“Healthy life expectancy falls in the UK – and the decline is worse among women”

https://theconversation.com/healthy-life-expectancy-falls-in-the-uk-and-the-decline-is-worse-among-women-281563?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20April%2027%202026%20-%203751238412&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20April%2027%202026%20-%203751238412+Version+B+CID_8ad7aa3622bc5510f59a3297b5de4d5a&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=Healthy%20life%20expectancy%20falls%20in%20the%20UK%20%20and%20the%20decline%20is%20worse%20among%20women

(Source: *The Conversation*, 28 Apr 2026)

“Healthy life expectancy in the UK – the years we can expect to live in good health – has fallen by more than two years over the past decade, according to a new Health Foundation analysis.

The decline has been larger for women than for men – a finding the report says raises ‘concerns about the worsening trend of women’s health’. Of 21 high-income countries, the UK has fallen from 14th to 20th on this measure over the same period; only the US now ranks lower. The aggregate matters, but so does the distribution. The gap in healthy life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas of England is now 20.3 years for women.

A girl born today in Hartlepool can expect to live just 51.2 years of good health; in Richmond-upon-Thames, 70.3. Translate that into time spent unwell and women in the poorest areas can expect roughly three decades of life in poor health, against around 13 years for the most affluent. In Wales, female healthy life expectancy fell by 3.7 years over the decade alone.”

The Health Foundation report is at: <https://www.health.org.uk/reports-and-analysis/analysis/healthy-life-expectancy-trends-in-the-uk-a-watershed-moment>.

Migration issues – Other Agencies

The impact of ‘Safe Country’ concepts on women seeking asylum in the UK

https://wirl.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/FINAL_Safe-Country-Report-10-February-2026.pdf?dm_i=7W2V,2PUDN,3WV1TR,6CRE6,1,0,0,0

(Source: *Asylos Monthly Research Update*, Apr 2026)

Just in case you haven’t seen this report which was published in Jan.

“The concept of safe countries is used by asylum host states to deny protection to refugees on the basis that they have, or may have, protection in another country. However, there is little analysis of the impact of its use on women seeking asylum from a gender perspective. The move to increasing use of the concept in the UK, as illustrated by the

government's recent announcement to further explore 'safe third country hubs' and safe country of origin lists to swiftly return claimants with 'unmeritorious' claims,¹ makes such analysis more necessary. This report is a first step in addressing the gap in knowledge and understanding [...]" [p3]

"Additional Support for Refugees, Asylum Seekers & Resettlement"

https://padlet.com/rachel_öner/additional-support-for-refugees-asylum-seekers-resettlement-lw8wzd6sbmp6mixa

A padlet by Rachel Öner (NATECLA), which includes "Welcome packs for different nationality groups and general advice and guidance."

Community cohesion and asylum accommodation: understanding local perspectives

Full report: <https://ippr-org.files.svdcdn.com/production/Downloads/Community-cohesion-and-asylum-accommodation-April-26.pdf?dm=1778241488>

Press release: <https://www.ippr.org/media-office/poor-communication-and-misinformation-fuelling-tensions-over-asylum-hotels-says-ippr>

Web summary: <https://www.ippr.org/articles/community-cohesion-and-asylum-accommodation>

(Source: *NewStart*, 8 May 2026)

"This report examines how asylum accommodation is experienced and interpreted within communities themselves. Drawing on focus groups with residents across six English case study areas – Liverpool, Plymouth, Hillingdon, Derby, Tamworth and Wakefield – alongside a dedicated focus group with people seeking asylum in Plymouth, the research explores why asylum hotels have generated different responses across the country, and what conditions support cohesion where asylum accommodation is present [...]"

We identify the following five key findings.

1. Perceived unfairness in housing and cost-of-living pressures is shaping attitudes to asylum accommodation.
2. Weak communication and low trust create space for misinformation.
3. Safety concerns reflect wider crime and disorder, with hotels sometimes becoming focal points.
4. National border anxieties coexist with local pragmatism.
5. Decline and community strength coexist.

Our research indicates that asylum accommodation must be embedded within wider housing and regeneration strategy, accompanied by proactive and transparent local engagement." [Taken from web summary]

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

“Cush Jumbo on the importance of an Arts-rich education”

<https://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/cush-jumbo/>

(Source: Cultural Learning Alliance *Latest News*, Apr 2026)

Published version of a speech by actor Cush Jumbo, which highlights “[...] the value of an Arts-rich education for every child – and the importance of a vibrant cultural sector in nurturing young talent.”

And I like:

“I remember being taken to the local library to see a tiny touring production of the children’s puppet TV show *Button Moon* and being absolutely sure that the cast had created a direct portal to outer space in the middle of Bermondsey. How had they done this? Were they going to put outer space back in afterwards? It was also the first time that I became aware that making theatre was something you could actually do as a job. And I was completely blown away by it. And that was in a local library.”

Broader issues – Other Agencies

“Books and brain development: why reading is much more than a pastime for children and teens”

https://theconversation.com/books-and-brain-development-why-reading-is-much-more-than-a-pastime-for-children-and-teens-282000?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Europe%20Newsletter%20-%20752026&utm_content=Europe%20Newsletter%20-%20752026+CID_486078552e2106c27be033546db332ce&utm_source=campaign_monitor_europe&utm_term=Books%20and%20brain%20development%20why%20reading%20is%20much%20more%20than%20a%20pastime%20for%20children%20and%20teens

(Source: *The Conversation*, 7 May 2026)

Interesting article:

“While some of us enjoy curling up with a good book, others prefer watching a series or playing videogames. But from the perspective of neuroscience, reading is much more than just entertainment.

This is especially true for children and teenagers. In the young brain, reading stimulates specific cognitive processes that can make a major difference in adult life.”