

The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 441, 21 August 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

“Shock and anger in culture sector after death of Jason Arday”

https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/2026/08/shock-and-anger-in-culture-sector-after-death-of-jason-arday/#msdynmkt_trackingcontext=8dec126f-cf2e-4891-bcc9-e3e1a2620300

(Source: Museums Association email updates, 18 Aug 2026)

Important powerful piece from the MA, quoting, for example, Museum X:

“We talk often about the “parading” of Black people in service of other people’s narratives and the way visibility can become exposure, and achievement can become a target,’ said Museum X.

‘What happened to Professor Arday over these past weeks sits inside that same history. The duty of care owed to him is a question society needs to sit with, not just academia and the media.’”

For more info about Museum X, see: <https://www.themuseumx.com/>.

Cost of living crisis/poverty/NEET – Other Agencies

“Local Voices, National Change”

https://www.ncb.org.uk/about-us/media-centre/news-opinion/ncb-secures-ps35m-give-young-people-leading-voice-ending-child?mc_cid=69738eccc2&mc_eid=b1c1881164

(Source: NCB Newsletter, Aug 2026)

“Local Voices, National Change is a five-year programme designed and delivered by the National Children’s Bureau to support children and young people with lived experience of poverty to influence decisions that affect their lives – locally and nationally [...]

The six local authorities participating are Lambeth, Luton, Wigan and Northumberland in England, and Antrim & Newtownabbey and Fermanagh & Omagh in Northern Ireland.”

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies

People, purpose, partnerships & place: lessons for digital inclusion from Cumbria

Summary: <https://www.digitalunite.com/sites/default/files/2026-07/People,%20Purpose,%20Partnerships%20and%20Place%20Executive%20Summary.pdf>

Full report:

https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/1982890559/People_Purpose_Partnerships_and_Place_Final.pdf

(Source: Digital Unite Newsletter, Aug 2026)

Important new report:

“Digital exclusion remains one of the most pressing and least visible forms of inequality in the UK. This report draws on in-depth interviews with members of the Cumbria Digital Inclusion Network (CDIN) to offer lessons for practitioners, policymakers and funders working on digital inclusion across the UK. It finds that effective digital inclusion depends on people, purpose, partnerships and place. Support works through trust and human relationships; people engage when digital tools help them do something that matters; no single organisation can address exclusion alone; and barriers and their responses are shaped by local geography, services, history and relationships.” [Summary, p2]

Charity digital skills report

Online version: <https://charitydigitalskills.co.uk/report/the-charity-digital-skills-report-introduction/>

(Source: *Digital Unite Newsletter*, Aug 2026)

The latest in the series of annual reports includes a valuable “Calls to Action” list.

For charities, the list includes:

1. **CEOs need to focus on skilling up staff and volunteers**
2. **Boards and CEOs need to grow their AI skills**
3. **CEOs must offer a clear vision for digital**
4. **Prioritise equality, diversity and inclusion in digital and AI plans.** “It’s worrying that the digital services of 22% of charities either aren’t reaching diverse and marginalised communities or charities don’t know if they are, whilst 27% of charities either rarely or never co-design services with users. Undertake user research with marginalised communities and involve them in co-designing services from the start. Learn more about inclusive design from [AbilityNet](#).”
5. **Talk to your community about digital and AI.**

Health & Wellbeing issues – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

Press release: “Major expansion of community mental health support across England”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/major-expansion-of-community-mental-health-support-across-england>

(Source: *Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance Bulletin*, Aug 2026)

“People struggling with their mental health will get help earlier and closer to home, with 159 new NHS mental health facilities opening across England under plans announced today (6 August 2026).”

The press release also says:

“Some of the community hubs will be newly built facilities, while others will be in libraries, banks and other community or high-street locations to move care closer to where people live, improving access.

They will all be in the heart of the neighbourhoods they serve and designed as welcoming settings with a non-clinical appearance.

Alongside this, 59 new mental health emergency departments will provide fast, same-day specialist support for people experiencing a crisis who are medically fit and do not need treatment in A&E.”

See also:

“PM promises ‘high street’ mental health centres to open in banks and libraries”

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/burnham-mental-health-centres-high-street-b3028408.html>

Migration issues – Other Agencies

“Situated social learning and the wellbeing of mothers seeking sanctuary in Wales”

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02601370.2026.2714421#abstract>

Open access article in *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, shared by its author, Laura Shobiye.

LGBTQ+ issues – Other Agencies

“Know Your Rights”

https://transactual.org.uk/know-your-rights/?link_id=3&can_id=30e439a67211f81f4bbace156600453a&source=email-2025-is-nearly-over-4&email_referrer=email_3363978&email_subject=transactual-launches-biggest-trans-lives-survey-yet-and-welcomes-new-patron

(Source: *TransActual Supporter Newsletter*, Aug 2026)

Important new guidance from TransActual:

“This page summarises general legal information relating to the rights of transgender and/or non-binary individuals under the law in England, Scotland and Wales. This information represents our understanding of these rights at the time of publication of this information.”

The guidance concludes with:

“We want to encourage trans people not to panic, not all hope is lost – it’s bad, but we don’t know the full extent yet, it takes time to figure these things out.

Even though laws impact our lives, they cannot tell you who you are.

We will keep fighting until all trans people in the UK are able to live safely, in dignity and with access to appropriate healthcare.”

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

The role of the public library in combating misinformation and disinformation: a review and action plan – public report for Arts Council England project INV-00786891

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/research-and-data/our-research-library/role-public-library-combating-misinformation-and-disinformation-review-and-action-plan>

(Source: *News from CILIP*, 19 Aug 2026)

Important new research report:

“This national study, the first of its kind in the UK, surveyed 372 public library staff in England to explore how staff understand, experience, and respond to mis/disinformation in their communities, and what support they need to fulfil their civic role. There are ten main findings:

1. Most of our participants are educated and experienced library staff, but most have not received any mis/disinformation specific training.
2. Most of our participants work in libraries that do not provide any mis/disinformation guidelines and/or educational materials and resources for their users/members.
3. Most of our participants are either not sure or confirmed that their library has no partnerships or collaborations with other organisations to address mis/disinformation.
4. Most of our participants are never or are rarely involved in specific practices to address mis/disinformation.
5. Most of our participants are faced with a broad range of challenges and concerns that limit their ability to effectively address mis/disinformation.
6. Most of our participants do not feel that they are successfully addressing mis/disinformation in their communities.
7. Some of our participants may have limited depth of understanding of the factors contributing to mis/disinformation.
8. Our participants have divergent views on remaining neutral when addressing mis/disinformation.

9. Most of our participants believe that libraries should have an active role in addressing mis/disinformation.

10. Most of our participants believe that their library is not doing all that it could do to address mis/disinformation.

Our findings highlight that public libraries in England are staffed by an educated and motivated workforce well-positioned to address mis/disinformation, but that most staff are equipped with little more than intent due to various infrastructure limitations.

Four main recommendations are made, to establish:

1. A national programme of library staff education and training to address mis/disinformation.
2. A national open access repository of library resources for addressing mis/disinformation.
3. A national partnership agreement for addressing mis/disinformation.
4. National library policy and operational guidance for addressing mis/disinformation.” [pp6-7]

Broader issues – Other Agencies

“Structured early language support has the potential to improve educational outcomes for all children”

https://www.nfer.ac.uk/blogs/structured-early-language-support-has-the-potential-to-improve-educational-outcomes-for-all-children/?utm_campaign=nd_jun_24&utm_medium=email&utm_source=dotdigit&utm_i=7IN9,CYH6,16YTPV,1SBI3,1,0,0,0

(Source: *NFER Direct*, Jul 2026)

Interesting blogpost from NFER, which looks at their recent evaluation of the Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI) Preschool:

“NELI Preschool is a 20-week language intervention programme developed by OxEd, a company founded on University of Oxford research, to complement the NELI Reception programme that has been rolled out nationally.

It provides training, materials and scripted support for practitioners to deliver structured whole-class sessions, alongside additional small group and one-to-one sessions for children who need additional support. The sessions focus on a specially written storybook each week which introduces four or five carefully selected words that become the focus of that week’s activities.

NFER evaluated the effectiveness of NELI Preschool in a large, randomised controlled trial with 303 early years settings, and 3,298 children. Children who received NELI Preschool made the equivalent of two additional months' progress compared with children in the control group (children who did not receive NELI Preschool), on average.

Disadvantaged children and those with lower prior attainment receiving NELI Preschool also made two months additional progress. Children in Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) settings made similar progress to children in maintained settings suggesting that the intervention is effective regardless of disadvantage, prior ability, or setting type."

"What does 'place-based' really mean? – and why are so many people talking about it?"

<https://www.thinknpc.org/blog/what-does-place-based-really-mean/>

(Source: New Philanthropy Capital *Weekly Update*, 10 Aug 2026)

A very useful explainer:

"At its simplest, place-based work brings people, organisations and resources together to address the unique needs of a specific place. It's built upon the recognition that every place has its own context, assets, and insight, and that these are critical to tackling social and environmental challenges effectively.

Yet many funding streams, services and strategies are developed nationally or around individual issues, even though communities experience challenges very differently on the ground.

A place-based approach starts with two simple questions:

1. What does this specific place need?
2. Who needs to come together to make change happen?"