

The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 443, 30 September 2026

Events

Events have been added to the Courses & Events pages on The Network website – see: <https://seapn.org.uk/events/>.

Cost of living crisis/poverty/NEET – Other Agencies

Briefing from members of UK civil society to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights

https://justfair.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/Briefing-for-UNSR-extreme-poverty-and-human-rights-.pdf?mc_cid=18862373d5&mc_eid=17c19d737e

(Source: email from Just Fair, 24 Sep 2026)

“On 7 September 2026, Just Fair brought together members of the UK Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Network from across the UK for a briefing with Professor Elena Díaz, the newly appointed UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights [...]

In organising the meeting Just Fair took particular care in selecting participants. The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) highlighted a number of groups as being disproportionately affected by poverty and rights violations in its 2025 concluding observations on the UK.

These include disabled people; migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum; LGBTI+ people; low-income families; people in precarious employment; children; female-headed households; people living in remote areas; and ethnically and religiously minoritised people.” [p3]

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

“Museums Change Lives Awards 2026”

https://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/museums-change-lives/awards-2026/#msdynmkt_trackingcontext=29aeb14-3965-4e03-8bee-6093f4f80200

(Source: Museums Association email updates, 11 Sep 2026)

The shortlist for the Awards has just been published.

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

“Government chooses 26 authorities to establish Young Futures hubs”

https://www.cypnow.co.uk/content/news/government-chooses-26-authorities-to-establish-young-futures-hubs?utm_campaign=Update%20bulletin%2016%2F09%2F26&utm_content=&utm_term=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cypnow.co.uk%2Fcontent%2Fnews%2Fgovernment-chooses-26-authorities-to-establish-young-futures-hubs&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Children%20%26%20Young%20People%20Now

(Source: Children & Young People Now *Update*, 16 Sep 2026)

“The government has announced the 26 local authorities that will be opening 42 Young Futures hubs offering enhanced access to mental

health support, employment opportunities and crime prevention services for 10- to 18-year-olds.”

“Government unveils areas to benefit from enrichment funding boost”

https://www.cypnow.co.uk/content/news/government-unveils-areas-to-benefit-from-enrichment-funding-boost?utm_campaign=Weekly%20RoundUp%2018%2F09%2F26&utm_content=&utm_term=htps%3A%2F%2Fwww.cypnow.co.uk%2Fcontent%2Fnews%2Fgovernment-unveils-areas-to-benefit-from-enrichment-funding-boost&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Children%20%26%20Young%20People%20Now

(Source: email from Children & Young People Now, 18 Sep 2026)

“The Enrichment Expansion Programme will see more than 400 secondary schools in 57 communities receive tailored support to help disadvantaged young people join sports teams, learn an instrument, or take part in outdoor adventures.”

This article lists the 57 areas receiving the funding.

Press release: “Time to end class squeamishness: first government unit to improve life chances for working class”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/time-to-end-class-squeamishness-first-government-unit-to-improve-life-chances-for-working-class>

(Source: email from The Equality Trust, Sep 2026)

Key points:

- “A new class unit will drive forward government work to improve life chances
- Social Mobility Commission to be closed down as part of wider government review into arm’s length bodies
- New unit to focus on improving lives of low-income families, disadvantaged communities and rooting out child poverty”

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies

“Inclusion is central to England’s education policy – but what it means is changing”

https://theconversation.com/inclusion-is-central-to-englands-education-policy-but-what-it-means-is-changing-291298?utm_campaign=the-daily-39618&utm_content=the-daily-39618_uk%7C2%7C39618%7C2e2a394b&utm_medium=email&utm_source=braze&utm_term=Inclusion+is+central+to+England%E2%80%99s+education+policy+%E2%80%93+but+what+it+means+is+changing

(Source: *The Conversation*, 22 Sep 2026)

Interesting exploration of what is meant by “inclusion”:

“The 1994 Salamanca Statement [see: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000098427>] was an international agreement on inclusive education, adopted at a Unesco world conference on special needs in education. Representatives from 92 governments and 25 international organisations agreed that children with special educational needs should have access to mainstream schools and that schools should adapt to meet the needs of all learners.

This takes place in 'schools for all' where differences are recognised and supported.

However, some inclusion extends beyond disability. It encompasses a wide range of factors that may shape educational experiences. These could be poverty, ethnicity and race, language and migration and LGBTQ+ learners.

Research on the definitions of inclusion has found that understandings vary considerably. They range from narrow interpretations focused on where particular children learn to broader conceptions centred on creating inclusive communities."

The author concludes:

"The debate about inclusion is not simply about structures or educational settings. Rather it is about values, relationships and the purposes of education itself. Greater attention must be paid to defining inclusion and considering whose voices shape that definition.

Inclusion should not be judged solely by where learners are educated, but by whether they are genuinely seen, known, valued and able to participate meaningfully within their educational communities."

Equality, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

"Museums must recognise class inequality in their EDI work"

https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/opinion/2026/09/museums-must-recognise-class-inequality-in-their-edi-work/#msdynmkt_trackingcontext=3801ec7d-6dbd-45b2-87e1-012d473b0200

(Source: Museums Association email updates, 29 Sep 2026)

Important article:

"The evidence is that class disadvantage is real, persistent and measurable.

White working-class boys eligible for free school meals have the lowest educational attainment of any major demographic group in England. They are least likely to progress to university, least likely to enter cultural professions, and least likely to visit museums.

These outcomes do not stem from EDI policies, they are the result of decades of economic change, deindustrialisation and declining social mobility. But because class is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, this disadvantage often sits outside the scope of our inclusion strategies."

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

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

“Museums on prescription: how cultural activities are becoming crucial to the public health debate”

https://theconversation.com/museums-on-prescription-how-cultural-activities-are-becoming-crucial-to-the-public-health-debate-291083?utm_campaign=europe-newsletter-39650&utm_content=europe-newsletter-39650_europe%7C116%7C39650%7C3082058e&utm_medium=email&utm_source=braze&utm_term=Museums+on+prescription%3A+how+cultural+activities+are+becoming+crucial+to+the+public+health+debate

(Source: *The Conversation*, 24 Sep 2026)

Just in case you haven't seen this terrific round-up article. The key takeaways include:

- “On June 18, European institutions declared culture to be a strategic priority for the European Union.
- It is now recognised that cultural activities produce tangible and positive psychological, physiological, social and behavioural responses that are good for your health.
- “Museotherapy”, or museum-based art therapy, is gaining ground, and the first museum visits on prescription have already been issued.”

Migration issues – Other Agencies

“Immigration in Sweden: how the country went from one of Europe’s most welcoming, to one of its most restrictive”

https://theconversation.com/immigration-in-sweden-how-the-country-went-from-one-of-europes-most-welcoming-to-one-of-its-most-restrictive-288995?utm_campaign=the-weekender-39509&utm_content=the-weekender-39509_uk%7C177%7C39509%7Cb3776529&utm_medium=email&utm_source=braze&utm_term=Immigration+in+Sweden%3A+how+the+country+went+from+one+of+Europe%E2%80%99s+most+welcoming%2C+to+one+of+its+most+restrictive

(Source: *The Conversation*, 12 Sep 2026)

Interesting “explainer” article.

“Q&A: Why have small boat arrivals declined in 2026?”

https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/commentaries/qa-why-have-small-boat-arrivals-declined-in-2026/?mc_cid=4676cfeaff&mc_eid=5bedccdc31

(Source: *Migration Observations: the newsletter from the University of Oxford’s Migration Observatory*, Sep 2026)

Updated commentary from the Migration Observatory:

“In September 2026, yearly small boat arrivals reached their lowest level since 2021. Around 27,900 people crossed the Channel by small boat in the year ending 9 September 2026. The last time arrivals were at this level was in December 2021. Arrivals were 40% lower than their recent peak in September 2025, and 11% lower than when Labour took office in July 2024.”

Briefing: Who migrates to the UK and why?

<https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2026-Briefing-Who-migrates-to-the-UK-and-why.pdf>

(Source: *Migration Observations: the newsletter from the University of Oxford's Migration Observatory*, Sep 2026)
Updated "Briefing" from the Migration Observatory, published 14 Sep 2026.

Briefing: *Migrants in the UK: an overview*

https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/2026-Briefing-Migrants-in-the-UK-An-Overview_3.pdf

(Source: *Migration Observations: the newsletter from the University of Oxford's Migration Observatory*, Sep 2026)

Updated "Briefing" from the Migration Observatory, published 11 Sep 2026.

LGBTQ+ issues – Other Agencies

"A new trans tipping point"

https://thebristolcable.org/2026/09/a-new-trans-tipping-point/?link_id=8&can_id=30e439a67211f81f4bbace156600453a&source=email-2025-is-nearly-over-5&email_referrer=email_3404897&email_subject=demand-gender-affirming-surgery-is-reinstated-in-wales-today

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

Just in case you haven't seen this powerful article about changes in trans visibility.

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

'It's amazing it's all in one place': evidencing the social value of public libraries

Report: https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media_1290650_smxx.pdf

Executive summary: https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media_1290652_smxx.pdf

Toolkit: https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media_1290651_smxx.pdf

(Source: email from Praveen Manghani, 21 Sep 2026)

New research undertaken by the University of Glasgow and Stirling Council Libraries and Archives.

Talking about the wider social role of public libraries, the report says:

"However, the full extent of this contribution is often difficult to evidence. Conventional performance measures, such as footfall, book loans, or computer use, capture levels of activity but fail to reflect the relational, cumulative, and often intangible outcomes that define much of library value. As a result, there is growing recognition of the need for more nuanced approaches that can better articulate how libraries support individuals and communities in practice [...]"

This project responds to this gap by developing a clearer and more nuanced account of how public libraries create social value in practice. Drawing on an in-depth case study of St Ninians Library in Stirling, it explores four interrelated domains of impact: social capital (the value of relationships and support networks), cultural enrichment (the way experiences expand and deepen our understanding of life), economic value (financial impact or benefit) and health and wellbeing (how physically and mentally healthy and happy people feel)." [Report, p3]

The report is accompanied by a toolkit:

“This skeleton toolkit helps you evidence the social value of your library using a simple, flexible approach.

You can complete it in five steps:

1. Gather your routine data (e.g. visits, loans, events)
2. Run a short sampling or observation exercise
3. Speak to a small number of users (short interviews)
4. Capture staff reflections
5. Bring these together into a short ‘story of change’

You do not need to complete everything – the toolkit is designed to be adaptable to your time and capacity.” [Toolkit p2]

“‘Free, forever’: Government rules out entry charges for overseas visitors to national museums”

https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/2026/09/free-forever-government-rules-out-entry-charges-for-overseas-visitors-to-national-museums/#msdynmkt_trackingcontext=3801ec7d-6dbd-45b2-87e1-012d473b0200

(Source: Museums Association email updates, 29 Sep 2026)

Just in case you didn’t see this news:

“At an event hosted by Art Fund and the Cultural Policy Unit at Tate Liverpool last night [28 Sep], the culture secretary Lisa Nandy announced that the government would continue its policy of universal free entry to the permanent collections of national museums and galleries.

‘Our museums are the places that light up the world. They remind of us our shared history, and enable us to step outside the confines of our lives. There is something incredibly special about that,’ Nandy said.

‘That’s why they must be free, forever, for everyone to access. I’m delighted that we’re continuing that transformative policy pioneered by the last Labour government, opening up access to our excellent museums for generations.’”

Broader issues – Other Agencies

“Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library: what its success means for children’s reading”

https://theconversation.com/dolly-partons-imagination-library-what-its-success-means-for-childrens-reading-290977?utm_campaign=the-daily-39406&utm_content=the-daily-39406_uk%7C2%7C39406%7C05942eac&utm_medium=email&utm_source=braze&utm_term=Dolly+Parton%E2%80%99s+Imagination+Library%3A+what+its+success+means+for+children%E2%80%99s+reading

(Source: *The Conversation*, 4 Sep 2026)

Just in case you didn’t see this article celebrating the work of the Imagination Library.