The Network Newsletter:
tackling social exclusion in libraries, museums, archives and galleries

Number 181, May 2016

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The Network's Website is at www.seapn.org.uk and includes information on courses, good practice, specific socially excluded groups, as well as the newsletter archive.

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Did you see …?

Museums Journal

The June 2016 issue[1] includes:

- Christian Baars "Museums need to increase their social relevance" ("Comment" column), which argues how important it is that museums engage with social issues [p14]
- Sacha Coward <u>and</u> Diana Morton "How can museums better reflect the lives of LGBT communities?" ("Comment – The Conversation" column). This conversation touches on some important exhibitions and events[2], and also emphasises the diversity within the LGBTQIA 'community' [p17]
- Sharon Heal "Museums are an agent for change" ("The policy column") which very briefly highlights work that museums are doing with refugees – and also other key areas, such as improving health and wellbeing, building stronger communities, and inspiring people: the piece ends with a call "[…] we want to hear how you are meeting this challenge." [p17]

Library Journal

The latest post[3] includes a write-up of the 2016 one-day conference of the Library Association of the City University of New York [LACUNY], "Race Matters: Libraries, Racism, and Antiracism," held on 20 May.

Of particular interest is the piece on the presentation by April Hathcock:

- Organisational shift, focusing on the talk by April Hathcock, "Race Matters in our Profession", which looked at whiteness[4]:

    > "Hathcock proposed that the discussion of racism in libraries begin with whiteness—not, she stressed, white people, but the pervasive

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[1] For further information, see: http://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal.
[2] These include: "Out at Sea", the Royal Museums Greenwich LGBT History Month events, http://www.rmg.co.uk/work-services/news-press/press-release/rmg-celebrates-its-first-lgbt; and "Proud City", in which the People's Story Museum reflects on LGBTQIA+ life in Edinburgh, http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/news/article/2056/proud_city_peoples_story_museum_reflects_on_lgbtqia_life_in_edinburgh.
[3] Lisa Peet. "LACUNY Institute 2016: Race Matters: Libraries, Racism, and Antiracism", *Library Journal*, 31 May 2016, http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2016/05/academic-libraries/lacuny-institute-2016-race-matters-libraries-racism-and-antiracism/#_ .
[4] There is further information about this in: April Hathcock. "White Librarianship in Blackface: Diversity Initiatives in LIS", Oct 2015, http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2015/lis-diversity/.

ideology. In a profession where some 87 percent of credentialed librarians are white, libraries have historically served as sites for white racial socialization, including a high incidence of microaggressions and a general denial of the cultural experiences of people of color. Neutrality is no longer an option, Hathcock stated; the profession is in need of change."

Her session also looked at diversity and inclusion:

"Diversity, she explained, is about libraries reaching out to people of color; inclusivity involves preparing to receive them […]"

Access: Journal of the Public and Mobile Libraries Group

The Spring issue[5] includes:

- Mark McCree "The RNIB Library: removing barriers" [pp2-4]
- Luke Wilson "Tinder Foundation: supporting libraries delivering digital" [pp16-18]
- Claire Duffield "'Studio 12': part of Leeds Library and Information Service", a brief account of the work of the innovative media facility (and LCLA finalist) [pp20-22].

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies

An inclusive growth monitor for measuring the relationship between poverty and growth

"This report presents a new tool – the inclusive growth monitor – to measure the relationship between prosperity and poverty. Economic prosperity does not necessarily benefit all and there is a compelling need to understand whether cities are delivering 'inclusive growth'." [front cover]

Recognising that the links between prosperity, poverty and inclusion are complex, JRF have produced this new tool[6]:

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[5] *Access: Journal of the Public and Mobile Libraries Group*, 10, Spring 2016. Available to download as a pdf (2580 kb) from:
http://info.cilip.org.uk/FS/2834/Documents/Access%20Issue%2010%20(v2.1).pdf.

[6] Christina Beatty, Richard Crisp and Tony Gore. *An inclusive growth monitor for measuring the relationship between poverty and growth*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (3940 kb) from:
https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/inclusive-growth-monitor?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%2016th%20May%202016&utm_content=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%2016th%20May%202016+CID_cf69ba8014484b38b373e327e28c5f8e&utm_source=Email%20marketing%20software&utm_term=n%20Inclusive%20Growth%20Monitor%20for%20measuring%20the%20relationship%20between%20poverty%20and%20growth.

"The inclusive growth monitor is based on 18 commonly available indicators which have been grouped into two themes – prosperity and inclusion – that each contain nine indicators. The inclusion theme captures different aspects of poverty and related forms of disadvantage, while the prosperity theme incorporates different elements of economic performance or economic potential. Each theme contains three dimensions (three indicators in each) that reflect different aspects of prosperity or inclusion […] The 18 indicators can be considered on their own or combined to create composite scores for any of the dimensions or themes. All data is presented at Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) level to capture outcomes in functional economic areas." [p1]

The findings highlight some important issues:

- "The data generated through the inclusive growth monitor shows there is a clear positive association between prosperity and inclusion levels in 2014. LEP areas with higher levels of prosperity in that year tend to have higher levels of inclusion, and vice versa.

- There is a strong geographical divide in terms of levels of prosperity and inclusion in 2014 as measured by the underlying indicators. LEP areas with the highest levels of prosperity and inclusion tend to be in the south and east of England; those with the lowest levels are largely found in the north and Midlands.

- The picture of change in prosperity and inclusion levels between 2010 and 2014 is more mixed:
    - Some LEP areas that had low levels of prosperity in 2014 such as the Black Country, Greater Lincolnshire and Greater Birmingham and Solihull also experienced little relative change between 2010 and 2014. However, other LEPs – notably Greater Manchester and Sheffield City Region – with low levels of prosperity in 2014 experienced comparatively high amounts of change between 2010 and 2014. This suggests that some of the core cities in the north are narrowing the gap relative to other areas in England.
    - LEP areas such as London, Lancashire and Greater Birmingham and Solihull had low levels of inclusion in 2014 and saw relatively little change in those levels between 2010 and 2014. By contrast, some LEP areas in the north and Midlands with low levels of inclusion in 2014, particularly the Black Country and North Eastern, experienced some of the highest degree of positive change in inclusion levels in the preceding four years. This shows they are catching up, but not quickly enough to change relative positions significantly.
    - London experienced the highest amount of change in prosperity levels and the lowest amount of change in inclusion levels between 2010 and 2014. This challenges assumptions that prosperity and inclusion are automatically correlated. By contrast, some LEP areas that have seen less change in prosperity levels between 2010 and 2014 have seen more positive change in inclusion levels. One implication is that areas that are less buoyant economically (as measured by prosperity indicators) still have

some capacity to make valuable inroads into poverty and related forms of disadvantage (as measured by inclusion indicators). A more active strategy to tackle spatial imbalances across and within regions may further strengthen an already positive relationship between inclusion and (limited) growth in prosperity in such areas." [p2]

There is an accompanying technical note[7] which:

"[…] contains details of all the data sources and methods used to construct and analyse the full set of 18 indicators used in the report to measure the relationship between poverty and growth at city regional level." [p i]

Finally, the dataset, containing scores and data on each indicator for all 39 Local Enterprise Partnerships, will be available from the Inclusive Growth Analysis Unit [IGAU][8] – they will also produce future versions of the Inclusive Growth Monitor.

Very useful background information.

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

The UK's ageing population: challenges and opportunities for museums and galleries

This important new report[9] explores "[…] the impact of demographic ageing on the museum and gallery sector." [p7]

"Museums are constantly being asked to do more with less, but this report indicates that there can be a double dividend – where museums and older people enrich each other and their local communities.

This report's impressive raft of case studies illustrate the way a range of museums have reflected on their practice and adapted their work to ensure older people find value and relevance in their interactions with them. These museums are considering the opportunities an ageing

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[7] Christina Beatty, Tony Gore and Richard Crisp. *Inclusive growth monitor: technical notes*. Sheffield Hallam University Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (360.58 kb) from: http://www4.shu.ac.uk/research/cresr/sites/shu.ac.uk/files/jrf-inclusive-growth-technical-notes.pdf.

[8] See: http://www.cities.manchester.ac.uk.

[9] Kate A Hamblin and Sarah Harper. *The UK's ageing population: challenges and opportunities for museums and galleries*. British Museum/ Oxford Institute of Population Ageing, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (698.48 kb) from: http://www.ageing.ox.ac.uk/download/173.

population brings, rather than simply working out how 'business as usual' will be sustained as the population ages." [p6]

It begins by setting the context, in terms of ageing; health and wellbeing; background policy; and diversity (and is illustrated with useful case studies throughout).

The report then goes on to look at the changing museums and galleries sector, in terms of changing priorities (moving beyond education and preservation, for example); changing levels of resources; the impact of digital technology; and the changing relationship between museums and galleries and their visitors (with older people as contributors, as well as recipients and beneficiaries of museums' collections).

The conclusions and recommendations include:

- The importance of viewing "older people as an asset, rather than purely an audience. Where programmes are 'done with' rather than 'done to' older people, the greatest rewards are reaped. By focusing on older people as purely an audience, it would be easy to see an increasingly diverse ageing population as a problem in a time of reduced resources. However, if viewed as stakeholders, whose contributions to collections, to volunteering, as staff, donors and members are encouraged, the benefits of an ageing population for the sector increase." [p46]

- At the same time, museums "will need to adapt their approach to an ageing population which is becoming increasingly diverse at a time when museums are being expected to do more, with less. The case studies have provided a number of examples of interesting work in museums and galleries which navigates some of these issues. Where people are unable or unwilling to attend museums and galleries in person, outreach can be important. This outreach can come in of different forms, from lectures to object handling to artistic activities, and museums and galleries will need to be increasingly creative to reach wider audiences with potentially less resource. The provision of resources such as 'memory boxes' and apps can also bring museum and gallery collections to audiences who may be unable to attend in person. The opportunities to engage digitally with new audiences will expand both as the technology improves but also as successive generations become more familiar with smart technologies." [p46]

- Partnerships are key. "They allow organisations to share resources and expertise and a means to achieve wider goals. The increased recognition of the role arts and museums can play in health and wellbeing will provide the opportunities to work with health and social care professionals, enhancing the experience of patients and service users but also providing the opportunity for professional development and cross-sector learning." [p46]

- "Intergenerational work is also important, as it allows museums and galleries to engage with younger people as well as older and therefore does not risk marginalising and excluding the former by focusing on the

latter. It also has increases the likelihood of engaging those who fall into a museum's profiling of an 'older person' but may not apply that profile to themselves." [p46]

The report concludes:

> "Museums and galleries have a great deal to offer older people – as diverse a group as they are – in terms of their wellbeing, health and social engagement. At the same time, older people have a contribution to make to museums and galleries, and in turn their wider communities. The pessimism about the 'demographic timebomb' and concerns about resources needs therefore to be tempered with recognition of the value of older people as active participants in galleries and museums, and the wider community." [p46]

An important report, highly recommended.[10]

Health & Wellbeing issues – Other Agencies

Better mental health for all: a public health approach to mental health improvement

This important new report[11] outlines what can be done to enhance the mental health of individuals, families and communities by using a public health approach.

Its prime audience is public health practitioners, but it also includes a set of key actions which "[…] all professionals working in public health and beyond can take to promote mental wellbeing and prevent mental health problems.

- Whether you work in a specialised public health role or generalist/general work force, consider what you can do within your sphere of influence to advance the public's mental health as a leader, partner and advocate.
- Move, wherever possible, from deficit to strengths-based approaches and ensure you promote good mental wellbeing, address the factors that create mental wellbeing and tackle mental health problems.
- Adopt a proportionate universalism approach, including universal interventions to promote mental wellbeing across whole populations, with more progressively targeted interventions to address specific needs among more vulnerable and at risk groups.
- As part of the universal approach, ensure that you are working towards your own mental wellbeing and that of your colleagues.
- Move towards ensuring mental health receives the same billing and priority as physical health in your work.

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[10] Source: Museums Association email updates, 15 Jun 2016.
[11] *Better mental health for all: a public health approach to mental health improvement*. UK Faculty of Public Health/Mental Health Foundation, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (747.10 kb) from:
http://www.fph.org.uk/uploads/Better%20Mental%20Health%20For%20All%20FINAL%20low%20res.pdf.

- Adopt a life course approach. The foundations of mental health are laid down in infancy in the context of family relationships. Place-based intervention in settings such as schools, workplaces and communities complements the life course approach and makes the most of existing opportunities.
- Reduce stigma and discrimination by increasing mental health and wellbeing literacy across the whole population. Include interventions to improve understanding of the impact stigma and discrimination have on the lives of people with mental health problems.
- Contribute to the expansion of the public mental health evidence base and focus on the interventions and activities that make the biggest impact.
- Ensure that you build evaluation into everyday practice and monitor the effects of practice on mental health." [p7]

This report is well worth looking at, and also seeing how we can take some of these actions in our own workplaces.[12]

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

Museums, migration and cultural diversity: recommendations for museum work

This new publication[13]:

"[…] aims to make museums aware of their potential in the context of a diverse society that is undergoing a process of change and to support them in finding a constructive approach to working with a range of different communities, migrants, refugees and minorities. The publication was originally produced by the 'Migration' working group of the German Museums Association in 2014 for the German museum community. However, its findings and guidelines are transferable to the European level and to different types of museums. This is why NEMO decided to adapt and publish this practical guide in English: to inspire museums all over Europe to find a multi-perspective and multicultural approach to their work and their collections in order to contribute to a healthy and diverse society." [p3]

The guidelines focus on what strategies might look like in the "core museum tasks [of] collecting (including conservation and research), exhibiting and outreach." [p5]

In terms of **collections**, it looks at:

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[12] Source: NCB *Policy & Parliamentary Information Digest*, 27 Jun 2016.
[13] *Museums, migration and cultural diversity: recommendations for museum work*. NEMO – Network of European Museum Organisations, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (297.21 kb) from: http://www.ne-mo.org/fileadmin/Dateien/public/NEMo_documents/Nemo_Museums_Migration.pdf.

- Re-examining and re-exploring existing collections

- Collecting new exhibits

- Developing questions about the collection, eg "How did the museum's collection come about? Did a specific collection profile exist from the outset (regional, national, scientific or thematic – e.g. technical and industrial history, commercial history, everyday culture)? What questions or interests were in focus (key topics)? When and how was the collection profile altered? Have [sic] the collection profile developed and/or changed over time? Have new topics been added?" [p8]

For **exhibiting migration and cultural diversity**, it focuses on:

- Incorporating contemporary witnesses and family history

- Temporary and permanent exhibitions

- Again, it asks questions, for example: "What is the basic conceptual orientation of the exhibition? Does it focus on the process of migration or on the development of a society with a high level of immigration?" [p11]

- It also asks questions about dialogue and participation, eg "What common goals unite the partners in the collaboration? How extensive should the participation be? How can collaboration be incorporated into the conceptualization phase?" [p11]

- Questions about attracting cooperation partners, eg "Which groups of people, multipliers, special interest groups, associations and organisations are relevant to the selected topics and target groups? What interests do they represent?" [p11]

- And important questions about staging the exhibition: "How can the exhibition present multiple perspectives and different interpretations? Does the exhibition shed light on or address different cultural contexts and possible interpretations? How are the objects contextualised? What is the relationship between individual objects, personal histories and history in general? Do the selected objects and the way they are presented touch on cultural or religious taboos? Was this a conscious and deliberate choice? What language is used for the texts, media and accompanying materials?" [p12]

It then looks at **new opportunities for outreach**:

"In terms of museums opening up interculturally, outreach work has an extremely important role to play. This is especially true in the case of communicating new content, promoting intercultural skills for handling long-standing social diversity and attracting new target groups.

Outreach work creates a dialogue between the audience and the museum, incorporating visitor interests into museum work. Outreach must be closely linked to the areas of collecting, research and exhibiting.

Museums should always orient their outreach work towards the target groups. The definition of the groups should be guided by the social milieus and migration should not play a prominent role." [p12]

Key areas to develop include:

- Inspiring interest in migration history and cultural diversity

- Promoting intercultural dialogue

- A productive approach to social diversity

    "Many visitor groups, particularly school classes, are culturally diverse. For outreach work, a special level of sensitivity and intercultural skills are required to draw attention to different points of view and engage visitors in a dialogue. This especially applies to historical, cultural historical and ethnological museums, as they are often dominated by national perspectives by virtue of the way they have developed over time. Social diversity also means linguistic diversity. Museums are ideal places for trying out and encouraging multilingualism. Every museum can enable creative access via language and can overcome language hierarchies." [p13]

- Addressing new target groups

- Developing intercultural skills

- Key questions around: inspiring interest; intercultural dialogue; target groups; and language and integration courses as museum partners. There is also a set of questions around CPD:

    o "How are outreach workers trained in intercultural skills and for which audiences?
    o How can the proportion of outreach workers with a migration background be increased?
    o What partners outside the museum can support these processes?
    o Which museum employees are specifically assigned to this area?
    o Which long-term audience development strategies can be realistically developed?
    o How will the implementation of these strategies be evaluated?" [p15]

Finally, it includes a series of **recommendations**.

"When a museum incorporates the topics of migration and cultural diversity into its collection, exhibition and outreach work, this has an impact on the museum as a whole. It becomes more open to society and can thus attract new visitors. The following recommendations are designed to facilitate this process." [p15]

The recommendations include:

- Intensify visitor research

- Develop new communication channels

- Set up active contact with partners

- Participation and training

- Additional expertise (eg language skills)

- Appointed contacts

  "Contact with new partners should be actively maintained in order to establish a basis of trust. The continuity of staff is of great importance here and the task should not be performed by external contract workers or temporary staff. Rather, it should be handled by individuals acting as clearly defined points of contact, comparable with the community officer role which has been established at certain British museums. As the workload for addressing the topic should not be underestimated, especially during the initial phase, a commitment is necessary within the institution and, where applicable, also from the funding body.

  Museums should promote participation among all social groups. To do this, access needs to be simplified and opened up to everyone. A new perception and reception of culture needs to be developed in order to foster exchange between museums and visitors, to better recognise the needs of visitors and to approach new visitor groups in a targeted fashion. This process also requires the development of intercultural skills – in both the workforce and the museum visitors." [p17]

This is a very important set of guidance with a really practical focus. Recommended.[14]

Broader issues – Other Agencies

The coalition government and social policy: restructuring the welfare state

This new title[15] from Policy Press is one that I offered to review for their website (so I could get access to it for the latest *British librarianship and information work* chapter which I am writing at the moment!), and the following should be published shortly:

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[14] Source: Museums Association email updates, 8 Jun 2016.
[15] Hugh Bochel <u>and</u> Martin Powell (eds). *The coalition government and social policy: restructuring the welfare state.* Policy Press, 2016. Further information at: http://policypress.co.uk/the-coalition-government-and-social-policy.

"This thorough assessment of the Coalition Government period, 2010-2015, really draws out the continuities (and some of the discontinuities) between the 'late-period' Labour Government, the coalition, and the Conservative Government of 2015.

The authors look at all the major social policy areas – except one, which I will mention below – including health, education, housing, social security and welfare, social care, family policy, criminal justice, and equalities, across the UK. This background is extremely valuable, especially supported by the many useful references.

The one area which is missing – and which, I think, could add even more strength to this book – is the impact on the cultural sector: for example, the effects of austerity on local authority libraries and museums have been particularly harsh, and this could well have added even more weight to the analysis of the impact of 'austerity' on the poorest and hardest-hit communities.

This is the second of these reassessments that I have drawn on for reviewing work in librarianship and information science for the previous five-year period (the other was Hugh Bochel (ed). *The Conservative Party and social policy*. Policy Press, 2011), and I found it immensely useful as a political and social aide-memoire.

Highly recommended."

Abbreviations and acronyms

CPD = continuing professional development
JRF = Joseph Rowntree Foundation
LCLA = CILIP's Libraries Change Lives Award
LEP = Local Enterprise Partnership
NCB = National Children's Bureau
RNIB = Royal National Institute for Blind People

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