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

Number 183, June 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.

Contents List

The Network

"The UK post-Brexit"

Given the importance of what is going to happen over the next few months, we are pulling together professional and other guidance in this post on our website[1] updated as things develop).

Did you see …?

CILIP Update

The June issue[2] includes:

- Rob Green "Building bridges for a broken community", an interview with Scott Bonner, Director of Ferguson Municipal Public Library (and keynote speaker at the CILIP Conference) [pp18-20]
- Sarah Lungley "New chapter for mental health and wellbeing", Suffolk's Mental Health and Wellbeing Coordinator talks about her work [pp34-35]

Museum Practice

The MA has just published a series of interesting posts on working with family groups on their "Museums Practice" site, including:

- Nicola Sullivan "Captivating family groups"[3]
- Caroline Marcus "Making diverse family groups feel welcome"[4]
- Sacha Coward "Harnessing the excitement and danger of the sea"[5]en
- Nicola Sullivan "Making the Magna Carta engaging for family groups"[6]
- Steve Gardam "An open book" (about the Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre)[7].

They also published a brief summary[8] of the new report, *The UK's ageing population*[9], assessed in the last issue[10].

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[1] See: http://www.seapn.org.uk/post/post-brexit.

[2] *CILIP Update*, June 2016 – further information from: http://www.cilip.org.uk/membership/benefits/monthly-magazine-journals-ebulletins/cilip-update-magazine.

[3] See: http://www.museumsassociation.org/museum-practice/family-groups/150620160-in-focus-family-groups.

[4] See: http://www.museumsassociation.org/museum-practice/family-groups/15062016-making-diverse-family-groups-feel-welcome.

[5] See: http://www.museumsassociation.org/museum-practice/family-groups/15062016-harnessing-the-excitement-and-danger-of-the-sea.

[6] See: http://www.museumsassociation.org/museum-practice/family-groups/15062016-making-the-magna-carta-engaging-for-family-groups.

[7] See: http://www.museumsassociation.org/museum-practice/family-groups/15062016-an-open-book.

Professional Manager

The Summer 2016 issue[11] includes an interesting article on diversity, Joanna Higgins "The six habits of truly inclusive organisations", which looks at six ways in which successful inclusive/diverse organisations operate:

- They have a story
- They lead by example
- They develop empathy
- They give good people a voice
- They use evidence
- They recruit for difference [pp29-31, 33-35]

ArtsProfessional

On 30 June, *ArtsProfessional* published an interesting article[12] by ACE National Council member David Bryan, which looks back at an article[13] that David published 25 years ago, and considers what changes there have been, and whether things have improved.

His overall view is that there is still much to be done:

> "The arts exist within the context of a changing society in which there has been general progress, but the racial gulf and displacement remains vast.
>
> Every major public body continues to produce reports that acknowledge that something is wrong with both the entry and progression of black staff. This is true of the NHS, the civil service, academia, the police and many others, including the mainstream arts institutions. The liberal arts are not inclusive and generous, as they would like to be seen.
>
> Even with the best legislation in Europe to protect those that have a history of discrimination, we are making poor progress. One of the reasons for this lack of progress is a tendency to focus on short-term,

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[8] Nicola Sullivan "Ageing population presents opportunities and challenges for museums", http://www.museumsassociation.org/museum-practice/15062016-ageing-population-presents-opportunities-and-challenges-for-museums?dm_i=2VBX,92VM,27LU0M,U8FH,1.

[9] Kate A Hamblin <u>and</u> 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.

[10] *The Network Newsletter*, 181, May 2016, http://www.seapn.org.uk/uploads/files/Newsletter-NS-181.pdf, pp5-7.

[11] For further information, see: http://www.managers.org.uk/insights/magazine/professional-manager-editions.

[12] David Bryan "The best road to a different future", *ArtsProfessional*, http://www.artsprofessional.co.uk/magazine/article/best-road-different-future.

[13] David Bryan "Separate and unequal", *The Insider* ("Opinion" column), Autumn 1991, p28.

knee-jerk responses that are unsustainable and devoid of any sensible shared common vision."

One of the issues that has side-tracked us has been:

"[The] long-standing tendency to treat African American stories as a proxy for black life in the UK. While I find this irksome, it provides employment, but the real issue is that their story is not our story."

David Bryan concludes with five suggestions for action:

- "Create a Diverse Centre of Excellence in each region. This would both acknowledge those that have been toiling away for years and provide a place for nurturing other stories.
- Create talent studios within each region to do what the National Theatre has done for decades – to experiment, test, discover and stretch, and therefore retain local diverse and working-class talent.
- We should insist that every city that is bidding to be a City of Culture or Northern Powerhouse initiative genuinely indicates how its diverse community of talent and audiences are included as contributors as well as beneficiaries.
- We should seek to develop quality partners and look to the universities. There is great potential for them to undertake a civic responsibility.
- We should invest in the existing black expertise."

This will help "[…] all of us to be engaged in broadening our frames of reference and to be willing to understand that other stories exist; that there are other truths and that black lives matter in the UK." Well worth reading.[14]

Youth Library Review

The latest issue[15] focuses on "Families: an open door to literacy".

Of particular interest are:

- Cindy Chilvers "Early Words Together: an initiative from the Literacy Trust", which briefly looks at this "targeted literacy programme empowering families with children aged two to five to improve early literacy behaviours and the home learning environment"[16] [pp6-7]
- Caroline Messer "Reading is Braw", a description of a whole-community reading initiative[17] [p9]
- Alison Brumwell <u>and</u> Tiffany Haigh "Supporting families who home educate: the Kirklees perspective" [pp10-11]
- Sharron Brown "Bookbug with an edge: the Bookbug+ Project in Fife", which describes how Fife Cultural Trust's libraries developed their Bookbug programme by creating "collections of books that are suitable

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[14] Source: National Alliance for Arts in Criminal Justice *News*, Jul 2016.
[15] *Youth Library Review*, 46, 2016. For further information, see: http://www.cilip.org.uk/youth-libraries-group/publications.
[16] Further information at: http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/early_words_together.
[17] Further information at: http://www.edubuzz.org/readingisbraw/.

for our Bookbug audience, creating a Bookbug reading group if you like"[18] [p13]

- Kim Tucker "Engaging disabled children and their families in libraries in West Sussex", which gives the background to their successful "Understand Me: the Communication Library". "This collection of communication resources was set up in partnership with our local Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) team and offers parents, carers, health professionals, teachers and early years leaders the opportunity to borrow devices that aid children's communication, speech and language".[19] [p15]

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

Valuing diversity: the case for inclusive museums

The MA has just published this important research report[20].

It is the result of a year's work, during which the researchers explored:

> "[[…] the experience of working in museums for people who self-identify as from a diverse background
> and
> reflections, suggestions and recommendations from those working for change." [p2]

drawing on the perspectives of more than eighty individuals working across the cultural sector in a variety of settings and roles.

> "Our definition of diversity is any characteristic which can differentiate groups and individuals from one another." [p3]

The report begins by briefly outlining the background; then sets some research questions; and outlines the aims for the research project:

- "to critically and honestly examine where we are as a sector for both workforce and audience
- to explore understandings of diversity and to elicit a wider definition of diversity than we have held previously

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[18] Further information about Bookbug at:
http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug/bookbug-sessions/find-your-local-sessions.
[19] There is further information at:
https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/campaigns/understand-me/,
https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/libraries/additional-library-services/understand-me-the-communication-library/, and https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/understand-me-the-communication-library.
[20] Jessica Turtle. *Valuing diversity: the case for inclusive museums.* Museums Association, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (155.30 kb) from:
http://www.museumsassociation.org/download?id=1194934.

- to explore and acknowledge hidden assumptions and power dynamics to develop a better understanding of why there is a lack of diversity in the sector
- to explore and interrogate the various cases for diversity to collaboratively agree concrete actions in response to these conversations – for the MA, for individuals and for institutions." [p8]

It then goes on to outline the approach used – a mix of drawing on the experience of "Transformers" participants, and expert speakers.

In terms of the key findings from the research:

- There is a helpful, brief summary of the differences of interpretation of diversity across the four nations [p12]

- There is widespread unconscious bias, and some level of conscious prejudice

- Issues around entry into museums work:

    "Some people who engaged with this process feel that the sector holds on to a culture of over-professionalisation, with many practitioners over-qualified for their role. This narrows entry to the workforce for people who don't take traditional academic routes. Others felt that academic qualifications are important for collections care and interpretation. The impact of this belief where collections care and interpretation are held psychologically and symbolically in the academic realm, means that this area of museum work will remain out of reach to many." [p14]

- Retention challenges

- Lack of holistic access and interpretation:

    "People with disability report that they can often feel that they are invited to engage with one part of the collection, one event, one exhibition or one part of the building rather than being invited in to an inclusive experience, despite accessible and inclusive environments being of benefit to all visitors." [p14]

- The need to rethink our understanding of what constitutes diversity:

    "[…] it is still necessary to broaden out our idea of diversity. In addition to national, regional and local nuances it is also important to develop a better understanding of the invisible dimensions of diversity (as well as continuing to pay attention to the visible dimensions)." [p15]

- Consider power issues, eg: "If the higher levels of our organisations are not diverse – and it is well documented that they are not – then in what ways can we devolve decision-making to genuinely include and act upon diverse perspectives?" [p15]

- Build a business case for diversity.

The report finally considers "pathways for action". These include:

- For individuals, initiatives such as self-organised networks

- For institutions and leaders:

   o The case for diversity
   o Horizontal decision-making
   o Honesty and a culture of peer-led learning
   o Equality, diversity and inclusion training and development.

- For sector-wide funders, bodies and associations, including the Museums Association:

   o Better and more comprehensive data

   o Creating key performance indicators

   o Embedded equality, diversity and inclusion training

   o Building the creative case: "The creative case outlines the importance of addressing the invisibility of influential artists of diverse backgrounds in the history of the arts in the UK – how could that line of enquiry be developed to consider other stories, other histories, other narratives related to science, industry and every day life as captured and shared in our collections?" [p18]

   o Supporting mid-career professionals to become diverse leaders

   o Improve perceptions of museums amongst young people

   o "Explore and share cultural nuances across the four nations" [p19]

   o Support broader understandings of what diversity means.

Finally, there is a page of case-studies drawn from the "Transformers" projects, and a list of further reading.

Perhaps it is important to reiterate much of what has been said around diversity over the last thirty years or so, but it does not seem to take us anywhere new. Sharon Heal, Director of the MA, describes it as "hard-hitting" [p2], but this not really how it comes across.

It was probably a wise decision – in a brief report – not to go into any depth around specific areas of diversity, but, on the other hand, this jars: for example, I was expecting to see something on sexuality, yet this isn't mentioned at all. (This is also reflected in the reading list which seems very narrow.) I wondered too, given that the report calls – rightly – for clearer definitions of diversity, whether it would have been helpful to have dealt with some of the common

'myths', for example that 'diversity' really only means race and disability (which is how it is often interpreted).

Despite that, this is a very timely report, and well worth studying. It is to be hoped that it has a real impact on diversity across museums.[21]

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies

"Inclusive Growth"

I came across this term in a post from NewStart[22], and this led me to an article from CIPFA[23], in which the authors describe inclusive growth as "the new concept in town".[24]

They report that the RSA have recently announced the launch of their Inclusive Growth Commission:

> "The Inclusive Growth Commission is an independent, impactful inquiry designed to understand and identify practical ways to make local economies across the UK more economically inclusive and prosperous."[25]

Neil McInroy and Matthew Jackson go on to argue that:

> It is important that we start to work through how we make the poorest benefit more from any growth. We also need to go further and make sure we make local economies and society more inclusive and fair. Whilst inclusion is not just about money and finances, we need to firmly place this aspiration for inclusive growth within the context in which it sits. In this we need a cold hard stare at the social recession caused by public sector austerity and its effects on our local economies.

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[21] Source: Museums Association email updates, 27 Jul 2016.

[22] Neil McInroy "Post-Brexit we need to build an economy for the many", *NewStart*, 28 Jun 2016, http://newstartmag.co.uk/your-blogs/post-brexit-need-economy-many/.

[23] Neil McInroy and Matthew Jackson "The case for an inclusive state", *PublicFinance*, 6 Jun 2016, http://www.publicfinance.co.uk/opinion/2016/06/case-inclusive-state.

[24] It also formed part of the title of a report assessed in the last issue (*The Network Newsletter*, 181, May 2016, http://www.seapn.org.uk/uploads/files/Newsletter-NS-181.pdf, pp3-5): 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.

[25] See: https://www.thersa.org/action-and-research/rsa-projects/public-services-and-communities-folder/inclusive-growth-commission.

Cuts to public services have contributed to poverty and exclusion, with a reduction in the social inputs to inclusion, including social care and children's services. We know that nearly £20bn has now been lost in local government spend. In addition, as CLES has shown through an array of work it also has had [significant effect on local economies](#) through supply chains, jobs and wealth. This is a significant block to inclusion. Furthermore, the areas where poverty is most prevalent is where the [cuts have been most severe](#). For example, Blackpool which is in the top ten most deprived authorities in the UK is also in the top ten authorities greatest hit by cuts."

They then go on:

"However, if we are serious about inclusion we should not be focussing on growth alone. As it stands, many places do not have growth anyway and tellingly no Local Enterprise Partnership area has returned to the rates of growth experienced pre-recession. What is on offer to those non-growth areas?

Some may well say that we must be pragmatic, and work within the financial context we have and the political choices that have been made. But let's not fool ourselves, the idea we can have significantly higher levels of inclusion whilst maintaining the public service and public economy straightjacket, is unrealistic and will surely fail. We are setting a much too high a hurdle if we think we can create inclusion in areas with no growth, or think we can bend clunky old growth and selfish old wealth to advance inclusion, without some help from the public economy.

In this, the progressive, socially innovative and truly inclusive agenda is to ease back on public sector austerity and let many inclusive flowers bloom. Across the country there are thousands of micro projects and activities that work on inclusion. They can be found within the 'third sector', in local government, on the innovative edges of mainstream public services, in businesses and in all the spots in between. They cannot be categorised by sector. But many of them share the same problem – their innovation survives on a shoestring and they lack scale, heft and most importantly resource. Without financial nurture, they will wither, replaced by another limp flower, only to wither again. They need the public economy to step up. This step up is not as a big state, but as a nurturing inclusive state.

It is clear to us that public austerity has been too deep, too fast and is too unfair. We can put our hopes for inclusion on growth alone, but poverty is too serious to be left to that. We need an inclusive state."

LGBTQ issues – Other Agencies

Inequality among lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender groups in the UK: a review of evidence

This review report[26] has just been produced by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research [NIESR] for the Government Equalities Office in order to:

> "[…] identify the nature of inequality and relative disadvantage experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGB&T) people in the UK. Its purpose was to support the development and targeting of policies intended to remove barriers to LGB&T equality [...]
>
> The review takes a systematic approach, scoping and critically reviewing published and unpublished literature from 2008 onwards. It covers empirical research for the UK and its constituent parts, and focuses on nine policy areas. These are:
>
> - education;
> - safety, including hate crime and domestic violence;
> - health and access to healthcare;
> - access to and experience of services;
> - employment;
> - LGB&T families, adoption and fostering;
> - homelessness and access to housing provision;
> - participation in civic society; and
> - 16-19 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEETs)." [p i]

The main findings include:

- The evidence base had major gaps and was "deficient".

- Education: "Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying remains a major problem in schools and, to an extent, in further and higher education. A number of measures, such as directly addressing incidents of HBT bullying, are thought by teachers to be effective but there is evidence that these measures fail to be universally implemented. Heterosexism and heteronormativity are prevalent in educational institutions reinforcing feelings of alienation among LGB&T students and leaving their specific support needs largely unaddressed. The evidence also finds teachers in need of leadership and support, including training." [p ii]

- Safety: "Evidence finds LGB&T people at greater risk of being victim to hate crime compared to heterosexual people, with recorded incidences increasing over time. Certain LGB&T groups are found to be at particular risk of hate crime – notably gay men, young people and those from black and ethnic minority groups." [p ii]

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[26] Nathan Hudson-Sharp and Hilary Metcalf. *Inequality among lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender groups in the UK: a review of evidence*. Government Equalities Office, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (1660 kb) from: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/539682/160719_REPORT_LGBT_evidence_review_NIESR_FINALPDF.pdf.

- Health: "There is evidence that LGB people's general health worse than that of heterosexual people. It was unclear whether this results from a higher incidence of mental health problems amongst LGB people, evidenced in the review, or also of physical health problems, for which there was no evidence." [p ii]

- Access to and experience of services: "Heteronormative assumptions as well as experiences and/or fears of discrimination prevent LGB&T people from accessing mainstream services. For this reason, LGB&T people have a preference for and are more engaged with specialist LGB&T organisations. There is some evidence that LGB&T people may be disproportionately negatively affected by spending cuts on voluntary and community sector (VCS) services, which are poorly funded. Evidence suggests services do not routinely monitor the sexual orientation and/or gender identity of their staff and/or service users, nor are LGB&T people routinely involved in consultative processes." [p iii]

- Employment: "There is, at best, weak, inconsistent evidence of inequality of employment outcomes by sexual orientation. Much of this evidence points towards higher employment rates, occupational levels and earnings for LGB people than for heterosexual people. However, some of these differences disappear when other characteristics are taken into account. Lack of data prevents a view on the relative performance of transgender people in the labour market.

  There is evidence of discrimination in recruitment, in promotion, deployment and access to social networks within particular occupations. The workplace remains LGB&T-unfriendly for many LGB and even more so for transgender people, with many experiencing harassment and bullying, impacting onjob [sic] choice, reduced progression and inability to openly identify at work." [p iii]

- LGBT families, adoption and fostering: "There is evidence of familial rejection of LGB&T children and young adults, impacting on mental health and resulting in homelessness. There is no evidence of either detrimental effects or, beneficial effects on mental health and gender adjustment among children raised by same-sex parents. While children of same-sex couples do not view having same-sex parents as problematic, they experience negative responses by others, including through homophobic bullying at school." [p iii]

- Homelessness and access to housing provision: "Despite claims in the research evidence that LGB&T people are at increased risk of homelessness, supporting evidence is weak and non-comparative. HBT abuse has been identified as the most prolific cause of homelessness, with young people in the process of coming out thought to be at particular risk. Consistent evidence finds LGB&T people experience and expect discriminatory practice from housing services. There is also some evidence that the needs of LGB people may not be being adequately addressed within housing services." [p iii]

- Young people: "Evidence from across all the policy areas covered by the review shows young LGB&T people face a hostile environment - in education, at home and in wider society - at a stage in their lives when they are particularly in need of support and approbation. Young people are subject to extensive homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, greater mental ill health and unwanted and risky sex. Experiences at this age have life-long implications for mental health and resilience. There is little evidence on the inequalities experienced by young transgender people, and no evidence was found on young LGB&T young people who were not in education, education or training (NEET)." [p iv]

In the section on Education, there is a review of evidence on school libraries, (and also information and clubs). This is drawn from the 2012 Stonewall Scotland report[27] which showed that:

"[This] lack of recognition of LGB&T people and relationships in schools extended to school libraries (35 per cent of LGB pupils said their school had no books or information on LGB people and issues and 50 per cent did not know whether it did) and to computer use (34 per cent said they could not use school computers to access information on LGB issues and 36 per cent did not know if they could)." [p17]

This is a useful summary of the position, and indicates where future research and action need to be focused.

Abbreviations and acronyms

ACE = Arts Council England
CILIP = Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals
CIPFA = Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
HBT = homophobic, biphobic and transphobic
MA = Museums Association
RSA = The Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce

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[27] *The school report: the experiences of gay young people in Scotland's schools in 2012*. Stonewall Scotland, 2012. Available to download as a pdf (346.5 kb) from: http://www.stonewallscotland.org.uk/sites/default/files/scottish_school_report_cornerstone_2012.pdf.