

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

Number 261, November 2022

(Formerly published as *Public Libraries & Social Exclusion Action Planning Network Newsletter*, issue 1, May 1999 – issue 29, September 2001)

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

---

## Contents List

### Did you see ...?

- *Information Professional* – page 2
- *Museums Journal* – page 2
- *ARC Magazine* – page 3
- *Books for Keeps* – page 3

### Black Lives Matter

- *Holding our own: a guide to non-policing solutions to serious youth violence* – page 4

### LGBTQ+ issues – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

- Banning of LGBTQ+ books and other library materials [continued] and Protests against Drag Queen Storytimes – page 5

### LGBTQ+ issues – Other Agencies

- *Positive futures: how supporting LGBT+ young people enables them to thrive in adulthood* – page 8

Abbreviations and acronyms – page 10

---

## Did you see ...?

### **Information Professional**

The Apr-May 2023 issue includes:

- “Books for little rebels” [news story] which lists the titles shortlisted for the 2023 Little Rebels Awards<sup>1</sup> [p9]
- Lesley English “Connecting town and gown through the library” [pp28-31], which looks at the key role that Lancaster University Library is playing in creating links between the University and the Lancaster Black History Group. Their work with new arrivals is interesting, and the article shows how a university library can make a real difference in its community. (Personally, I thought there was an area which could have done with greater exploration: having opened up the Library in this way, they have also now put in access control, which feels as though it defeats the object.)
- Ash Green “Network AGM 2023”, which reports back briefly on the CILIP LGBTQ+ Network’s AGM and their key areas of work [p32]
- Morag Clarkson “The space is the thing”, an article from the CILIP Disability Network, which focuses particularly on the importance of libraries’ Warm Welcome work [p46]
- Helen Mitchell “Appreciating the value of a local library” [“Insight” column], which continues the Warm Welcome theme, as Helen (an Apprentice) describes some of her work at Skelmersdale Library [p50]

### **Museums Journal**

The May/June issue includes:

- Geraldine Kendall Adams “It’s now or never” [pp4-5], which emphasises that time is running out to capture the stories of the Windrush generation of new arrivals (and, indeed, some of their children’s stories too).<sup>2</sup> As the article concludes:

“[...] the entire UK sector has a responsibility to keep this vital chapter in British history alive for future generations.” [p5]

- Geraldine Kendall Adams “Seeing the bigger picture”, which introduces *Scotland’s Museums and Galleries Strategy 2023-2030*<sup>3</sup>, and particularly focuses on its emphasis on the climate crisis [pp8-9]

---

<sup>1</sup> See: <https://littlerebels.org/>.

<sup>2</sup> For further info, see: <https://www.nationalwindrushmuseum.com/>.

<sup>3</sup> See: <https://www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk/strategy/scotlands-museums-and-galleries-strategy/>.

- Jennifer Cragg “Communities key to Wales’s new significance assessment toolkit”, which stresses the importance of community involvement [p13]
- John Giblin and Phoenix Archer “We need to encourage a plurality of voices in collections-based research” [“Comment” column], which introduces the next phase of “Exchange: Community-led Collections Research”<sup>4</sup> [p15]
- Juliana Gilling “Tomorrow’s world”, which looks at some exciting initiatives being developed by museums and science centres [pp22-27]
- Geraldine Kendall Adams “Held in trust” [interview with Hilary McGrady], which focuses on some of the exciting work being developed by the National Trust [pp28-31]
- Kate Melvin “Ancient and modern”, which looks at recent developments at Manchester Museum, including a piece on community curation [pp38-41]

### ***ARC Magazine***

The May & June issue<sup>5</sup> includes:

- Julie Davies “Opening Lines” [pp5-7], which looks at the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre project<sup>6</sup> to “[...] work with a small group of people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties (SEMH) needs or care experience who may lack confidence and/or experience anxiety issues.” [p5]

### ***Books for Keeps***

In the latest issue<sup>7</sup>:

- Darren Chetty and Karen Sands-O’Connor continue their “Beyond the Secret Garden” series, this time looking at how depictions of the British countryside are changing and drawing together some recent titles [pp12-13]
- Naomi Jones “Dyslexia and me”, in which the author talks about how dyslexia has affected her life and her writing [p16]
- Sian Hardy “Talking point: navigating the literacy resource landscape”, which introduces Literacy Hive<sup>8</sup> [p18]

---

<sup>4</sup> See: <https://www.nms.ac.uk/collections-research/collections-departments/global-arts-cultures-and-design/projects/exchange-community-led-collections-research/>.

<sup>5</sup> *ARC Magazine*, 392, May/June 2023.

<sup>6</sup> Further info at: [https://www.wshc.org.uk/images/pdf/DigiCreative\\_Heritage\\_leaflet.pdf](https://www.wshc.org.uk/images/pdf/DigiCreative_Heritage_leaflet.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> *Books for Keeps*, 260, May 2023, <https://booksforkeeps.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/BfK-260-May-2023.pdf>.

---

## Black Lives Matter

### ***Holding our own: a guide to non-policing solutions to serious youth violence***

Liberty have just published this important report<sup>9</sup> which was jointly compiled by Art Against Knives<sup>10</sup>, No More Exclusions<sup>11</sup>, Northern Police Monitoring Project<sup>12</sup>, Joint Enterprise Not Guilty by Association (JENGBA)<sup>13</sup>, Release<sup>14</sup>, INQUEST<sup>15</sup>, National Survival User Network<sup>16</sup>, Maslaha<sup>17</sup> and Kids of Colour<sup>18</sup>.

At its core:

“The social issue we focus on in this guide is ‘serious youth violence’. Serious youth violence is a term that broadly refers to harm inflicted on young people by other young people, resulting in serious injury or death. In this guide, we are dealing with serious youth violence both as a real issue, and an imagined issue [...]

Serious youth violence is an imagined issue insofar as it is constructed by politicians and the mainstream press as a justification for the continued over-policing of Black communities and as a lever to call for ever more police powers [...]

At the same time, serious youth violence is a real issue, in that government neglect, runaway inequality, poverty, and a myriad of other factors have created a situation in which violence is occurring, and young people are experiencing serious harm – including death – as a result. This is a human rights issue. And yet the policies being introduced in response to this situation fail both to respect human rights and to tackle the root causes of the issue, thereby exacerbating the very problems they claim to solve.” [p12]

Each chapter in the report is divided into three sections: what to dismantle, what to build, and existing good practice.

---

<sup>8</sup> “Literacy Hive is a comprehensive library of literacy resources for primary and secondary teachers categorised so that they can find the support they are looking for quickly and easily.” See: <https://www.literacyhive.org/>.

<sup>9</sup> *Holding our own: a guide to non-policing solutions to serious youth violence*. Liberty, 2023, [https://www.libertyhumanrights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/HoldingOurOwn\\_Digital-DoubleSpreads.pdf](https://www.libertyhumanrights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/HoldingOurOwn_Digital-DoubleSpreads.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> See: <https://www.artagainstknives.com/>.

<sup>11</sup> See: <https://www.nomoreexclusions.com/>.

<sup>12</sup> See: <http://npolicemonitor.co.uk/>.

<sup>13</sup> See: <https://jointenterprise.co/>.

<sup>14</sup> See: <https://www.release.org.uk/>.

<sup>15</sup> See: <https://www.inquest.org.uk/>.

<sup>16</sup> See: <https://www.nsun.org.uk/>.

<sup>17</sup> See: <https://www.maslaha.org/>.

<sup>18</sup> See: <https://kidsofcolour.com/>.

As well as these more detailed findings and recommendations, the report also includes demands for today and demands for tomorrow:

### **Today**

- End school exclusions and remove police from schools
- End drugs policing
- Dismantle harmful practices in traditional mental health systems
- End cuts to youth services
- End the practice of joint enterprise
- End the practice of pre-crime policing
- Make the Inquest system more truthful, just and accountable

### **Tomorrow**

- Build an emancipatory education system based on care and support, not discipline and punishment
- Decriminalise all drugs and reinvest resources in trauma services, mental health counselling and harm reduction services
- Build new structures of care and support for people experiencing mental health crises
- Invest in safe, healing-centred and racially literate spaces for young people
- Develop community-based solutions to harm that allow young people's friendships, communities and cultures to flourish
- Invest in and mobilise the expertise and knowledge of our communities to create holistic public services
- Move away from policing as a response to social problems

which set out their broad vision of what society could/should become.

This is a powerful report designed to make us all think. Recommended.<sup>19</sup>

---

## **LGBTQ+ issues – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations**

### **Banning of LGBTQ+ books and other library materials [continued] and Protests against Drag Queen Storytimes**

#### **“People Get Ready: Preparing for Challenges | Censorship”**

A useful article<sup>20</sup> in *Library Journal* that argues that:

---

<sup>19</sup> Source: email from Liberty, 25 Apr 2023.

<sup>20</sup> Lisa Peet “People Get Ready: Preparing for Challenges | Censorship”, *Library Journal*, 19 Apr 2023, [https://www.libraryjournal.com/story/news/people-get-ready-preparing-for-challenges-censorship?utm\\_campaign=LJXpress&utm\\_medium=email&\\_hsmi=255753540&\\_hsen=c=p2ANqtz-8MXW\\_nfWuib-weSdkUrttLqfK73U9uR3qrRXtFel-5f8-](https://www.libraryjournal.com/story/news/people-get-ready-preparing-for-challenges-censorship?utm_campaign=LJXpress&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=255753540&_hsen=c=p2ANqtz-8MXW_nfWuib-weSdkUrttLqfK73U9uR3qrRXtFel-5f8-)

“Library leaders, staff, and boards need to be prepared for increasingly sophisticated attacks on readers’ rights”

The article goes on to say that:

“As censorship of materials, programs, and services ramps up around the country, an increasing number of politically right-wing groups are making public (and some academic) libraries their primary targets. Despite the insistence that they’re concerned for community members, the groups mounting opposition to anti-racist or LGBTQIA+-themed titles in libraries are not grassroots organizations, nor are they necessarily locally based [...]

While these challenges often feel like they come out of left field with little provocation beforehand, a clear pattern of deliberate and coordinated action is at work, and libraries can prepare to meet the moment. Immediate-action items include educating staff and the board of trustees on challenge procedures, reviewing and strengthening current policies, forging active and supportive relationships with elected officials, and understanding the American Library Association (ALA) censorship reporting tools. But there are other proactive measures libraries can take to be as ready as possible and to help allay worries when challenges do arrive.”

There are some helpful, practical suggestions, including:

- Everyone should know their role
- Make sure that all policies, checklists, and toolkits are available to staff and trustees when they need them
- Encourage library staff not to take challenges personally<sup>21</sup>

This is a timely reminder of what we all need to think through and have in place.<sup>22</sup>

### “Staff at Cork library abused over LGBT+ reading material”

As noted in the previous *Newsletter*<sup>23</sup>:

“In Ireland, libraries are currently facing intimidation and abuse over LGBTQ+ books for teens.”<sup>24</sup>

---

[tL2Pfhhr9zdZStAhfmIF-RHZohqZQMtAb3cc3cQLolxlw&utm\\_content=255753540&utm\\_source=hs\\_email](https://www.thepinknews.com/2023/04/21/lgbtq-books-ban-fox-fisher-). NB you will need to

<sup>21</sup> It is also worth bearing in mind that some staff will take some challenges personally (eg someone who identifies as queer being faced with an anti-LGBTQ+ challenge), and we need to know how to deal with this and to offer appropriate support.

<sup>22</sup> Source: *LJXpress – Library Journal*, 25 Apr 2023.

<sup>23</sup> *Network Newsletter*, 260, Oct 2022, p7.

<sup>24</sup> Taken from: Patrick Kelleher “LGBTQ+ book bans are ‘actively harming children’, authors warn: ‘Echoes of Nazi book burnings’” *PinkNews*, 21 Apr 2023, <https://www.thepinknews.com/2023/04/21/lgbtq-books-ban-fox-fisher->

The *Irish Examiner* reported<sup>25</sup> that:

“Cork's public library network has no plans to remove LGBT+ reading material despite staff at its central library being subjected to intimidation and horrific verbal abuse.

Cork City Council confirmed that it has reported to gardaí a number of recent incidents at the Grand Parade library involving people opposed to the display of the material [...]

A number of library staff have been subjected to verbal abuse and 'paedophile slurs' by people who have entered the building in recent weeks to object to the display of LGBT+ reading material.

In one incident in recent days, an individual grabbed a copy of Juno Dawson's book, *This Book is Gay*, and ripped it up.

In a statement to the *Irish Examiner*, a council spokesperson said staff at its central library have, like staff at a number of libraries across the country, 'been subjected to campaigning from groups who object to LGBT+ reading lists which are available to young adults'.

Following up on this news-story, *The Echo* ran an interview<sup>26</sup> with Jim MacSweeney (Manager, Gay's The Word) who said:

“I think it's fantastic that LGBT books are available in libraries – they certainly weren't there when I was growing up and it's really important just to have visibility, to let people know that they're not alone.”

### **“Meeting The Challenge: Teens take a stand in the intellectual freedom fight”**

This *American Libraries* article<sup>27</sup> looks at how some young people are responding to attempts to ban books – for example:

---

[owl/?utm\\_source=piano&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=myspinknews&pnespid=tKdjCiQeKPhKgOvf.ya\\_SYmLp0v0XZ8pfLGwmbQ5vgFmAVzVBicPF6AVzWA6vw5D3vLclAtYIQ](https://www.owllibrary.org/?utm_source=piano&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=myspinknews&pnespid=tKdjCiQeKPhKgOvf.ya_SYmLp0v0XZ8pfLGwmbQ5vgFmAVzVBicPF6AVzWA6vw5D3vLclAtYIQ).

<sup>25</sup> Eoin English “Staff at Cork library abused over LGBT+ reading material”, *Irish Examiner*, 13 Mar 2023, <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/munster/arid-41092459.html>.

<sup>26</sup> Amy Nolan “‘Not the country I left’: Cork man working in UK's oldest LGBT bookshop proud of changed Ireland”, *Echo LIVE.ie*, 12 Apr 2023, <https://www.echolive.ie/corknews/arid-41114170.html>.

<sup>27</sup> Emily Udell “Meeting The Challenge: Teens take a stand in the intellectual freedom fight”, *American Libraries*, 1 May 2023, [https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2023/05/01/meeting-the-challenge/?utm\\_campaign=727747\\_Fortnightly%20newsletter%203%20May%202023%20-%20MEMBER&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=The%20Chartered%20Institute%20of%20Library%20and%20Information%20Professionals&dm\\_i=6WFS,FLJ7,9VBO9,1Y07T,1](https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2023/05/01/meeting-the-challenge/?utm_campaign=727747_Fortnightly%20newsletter%203%20May%202023%20-%20MEMBER&utm_medium=email&utm_source=The%20Chartered%20Institute%20of%20Library%20and%20Information%20Professionals&dm_i=6WFS,FLJ7,9VBO9,1Y07T,1).

“In summer 2021, several parents and community members challenged a handful of books at the school, including the memoir *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe. In response, [Ava] Kirtley and about 40 of her peers met that fall at a student-run social justice club to discuss how to respond. They made plans to attend the next school board meeting in December to protest the proposed bans.

‘One of the most infuriating things was that [the book ban supporters] were claiming they were speaking for us,’ says the now 18-year-old. ‘We felt like our voices were not just being ignored but being taken away.’

Feeling exhilarated from speaking out at the board meeting alongside her peers, Kirtley was determined to address the issue further. She began planning a club for students focusing on banned books.

With more than \$3,500 raised from a GoFundMe campaign—with leftover funds donated to the local public library—she collaborated with a local independent bookseller to acquire 40 copies each of four titles [...]”<sup>28</sup>

### **“Penguin Random House and authors sue Florida school district over anti-LGBTQ+ book bans”**

According to an article<sup>29</sup> in *PinkNews*:

“Legal action has been taken against the Escambia County School District and the Escambia County School Board in Pensacola, Florida for violating the First Amendment rights of students, authors and publishers by removing books from its libraries ‘based on ideological objections to their contents or disagreement with their messages or themes’.

In addition to this, the lawsuit also claims the school district violated the Equal Protection Clause of the constitution because the books removed were ‘disproportionately’ by ‘non-white and/or LGBTQ authors, or which address topics related to race or LGBTQ identity’.”

---

## **LGBTQ+ issues – Other Agencies**

### ***Positive futures: how supporting LGBT+ young people enables them to thrive in adulthood***

This is a powerful new report<sup>30</sup> from Just Like Us:

---

<sup>28</sup> Source: *News from CILIP*, 3 May 2023.

<sup>29</sup> Sophie Perry “Penguin Random House and authors sue Florida school district over anti-LGBTQ+ book bans”, *PinkNews*, 19 May 2023, [https://www.thepinknews.com/2023/05/19/penguin-random-house-florida-book-bans-lawsuit-lgbtq/?utm\\_source=piano&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=mypinknews&pnespid=ur06DS9Bb7sayqncDmoDJuTu0z\\_TsVoKrizmew2sE1mscq3F.CDCvkD96876AXbHrVZRgIxPA.](https://www.thepinknews.com/2023/05/19/penguin-random-house-florida-book-bans-lawsuit-lgbtq/?utm_source=piano&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=mypinknews&pnespid=ur06DS9Bb7sayqncDmoDJuTu0z_TsVoKrizmew2sE1mscq3F.CDCvkD96876AXbHrVZRgIxPA.)



“Positive Futures examines the individual and disproportionate challenges that LGBT+ young adults face in school, their family life and the workplace. We independently surveyed 3,695 18-to 25-year-olds from across the UK in January 2023, including 1,736 LGBT+ respondents, to enable us to examine how being LGBT+ shaped their formative years [...]

In this report, we set out what kind of impact those challenges in school and at home have on early adulthood. The results demonstrate that a lack of support in LGBT+ young people’s teenage years is linked to long-lasting and devastating effects on their mental health, self-worth, chances of family estrangement and even their outlook on their careers and whether they believe they’ll find a life partner.” [p6]

The report has a number of recommendations, including for parent, carers and guardians; looks at ways of creating support outside the biological family; and then has recommendations for school staff and the workplace. These include:

“There must be safe and supportive environments created for those whose families do not embrace, love and support their LGBT+ children. These places could include school, youth clubs, **libraries**, community groups and places of worship.” [p10, emphasis mine]

“We recommend school staff create a supportive school environment in the following ways:

- Begin talking about LGBT+ people positively from the outset – the majority of LGBT+ respondents said LGBT+ inclusive education should begin in primary school and nursery. In Early Years, KS1 and KS2, this looks like diversifying the **library book collection** [...]” [p10, emphasis mine]

The recommendations for the workplace are equally strong:

- Update policies to better support LGBT+ employees, such as paternity, adoption leave and transitioning at work policies.
- Make clear the organisation’s year-round commitment to allyship by providing meaningful volunteering opportunities for LGBT+ and ally staff to support LGBT+ charities and causes.
- Speak up about current issues LGBT+ people (and therefore staff) may be facing; this is particularly important in a time where there is rising transphobia and hate crime.
- Implement diverse recruitment practices, ensuring all staff inductions are LGBT+ inclusive, signposting to support, and establishing a LGBT+ employee network (if there isn’t one already).

---

<sup>30</sup> *Positive futures: how supporting LGBT+ young people enables them to thrive in adulthood.* Just Like Us, 2023, <https://www.justlikeus.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Positive-Futures-report-by-Just-Like-Us-compressed-for-mobile.pdf>.

- Ensure anti-LGBT+ bullying is not tolerated. This is particularly important as LGBT+ respondents faced higher incidences of workplace bullying.
- Show visible signs of acceptance through activities such as taking part in a Rainbow Ribbons fundraiser or organising LGBT+ workplace panel talks.
- Celebrate intersectional diversity. LGBT+ respondents who were also people of colour or had a faith faced further challenges and therefore need more support.” [p12]

Highly recommended.<sup>31</sup>

---

## Abbreviations and acronyms

LGBT+/LGBTQ+/LGBTQIA = all abbreviations for people who identify as lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual

---

This Newsletter was compiled by John Vincent, and all items are written by him, unless otherwise stated. Please send any comments or items for the next issue to:

John Vincent  
Wisteria Cottage  
Nadderwater  
Exeter EX4 2JQ

Tel/fax: 01392 256045  
E-mail: [john@nadder.org.uk](mailto:john@nadder.org.uk)

November 2022 (published June 2023)

---

<sup>31</sup> Source: *PinkNews*, 1 Jun 2023.