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

Number 107, March 2010

(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 and includes information on courses, good practice, specific socially excluded groups, as well as the newsletter archive.

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Did you see …?

Adults Learning

The March issue[1] includes a number of interesting articles, including:

- A brief summary of the report, *Doing things differently* [see below], "'Superficial' targets hamper inclusion" [p4] and an article by the Inquiry co-chair, Jacqui Henderson, "A challenge to do things differently" [pp16, 18]
- Anna Coote "Changing the way we work", which argues the case for adopting a 21 hours working week [pp9-11]
- Simon Fanshawe and Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah "Thinking outside the box", an introduction to the new paper[2] from ippr, which looks at new ways of viewing diversity [pp13-15]

Public Library Journal

The Spring issue[3] includes:

- John Vincent "Empower, inform enrich …", which celebrates some of the work that public libraries have contributed to social justice [pp7-8]
- Lisa D'Onofrio "'I know we have opened doors'", which looks at Norfolk's work with looked-after children [pp14-16].

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[1] *Adults Learning* 21 (7) March 2010. Further information at: www.niace.org.uk/adultslearning.
[2] Simon Fanshawe and Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah. *You can't put me in a box: super-diversity and the end of identity politics in Britain*. ippr, 2010. Available to download as a pdf from: http://www.ippr.org.uk/publicationsandreports/publication.asp?id=725 (you will need to log on to the website to download). This paper will be assessed in a future Newsletter.
[3] *Public Library Journal* 25 (1), Spring 2010. Further information from: http://www.cilip.org.uk/get-involved/special-interest-groups/public/journal/pages/journal.aspx.

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

"Communities"

Just launched is this new section[4] on the MLA website. It includes:

> "… information, advice and other resources to help you engage and involve your community in planning and delivery. These pages set out some best practice minimum standards and examples of how a local authority or service might go beyond these minimums to involve people in innovative and exciting ways."

It sets out why it is important to engage with people:

> "High quality engagement and involvement will help to ensure that:
>
> * people feel empowered and able to have a real influence on service planning and delivery
> * services are of a higher quality, appropriate for the community and lead to increased positive outcomes for local people, and
> * local services and the community form ongoing, mutually beneficial relationships, through which they work together to improve people's lives."

The website links to nine sections; two of these are described as "minimum standard":

* Provision of information – communicating with local communities to meet their needs[5]
* Carrying out a consultation[6], which draws on the Government's *Code of Practice*[7]

These are followed by six key areas for development:

* 'The duty to involve' – how we can help[8]

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[4] See: http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/policy_development/communities.

[5] See: http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/policy_development/communities/Minimum_standard_provision_of_information.

[6] See: http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/policy_development/communities/Minimum_standard_carrying_out_a_consultation.

[7] *Code of Practice on consultation.* Better Regulation Executive, Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform, 2008. Available to download as a pdf from: http://www.berr.gov.uk/files/file47158.pdf.

[8] See: http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/policy_development/communities/The_duty_to_involve_how_we_can_help.

- Promoting local democracy – how we can help[9]
- Working with community groups[10]
- Working with volunteers[11]
- Involving people in decision-making[12]
- Community management and community ownership[13]

Finally, there is a link to a page of Key resources[14]. This includes resources on:

- Policy context
- Planning your engagement and involvement
- Carrying out a consultation
- The duty to involve
- Working with volunteers
- Involving and collaborating with people in decision-making
- Community management and the ownership of assets
- Evidencing your contribution to community empowerment outcomes
- Equality Impact Assessments
- The CLG review[15] into redress for citizens when their council services fail to meet agreed standards.

This new web resource is a handy starting point for ensuring that the community is involved in our service development and provision.[16]

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[9] See:
http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/policy_development/communities/Promoting_local_democracy_how_we_can_help.
[10] See:
http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/policy_development/communities/Working_with_community_groups.
[11] See:
http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/policy_development/communities/Working_with_volunteers.
[12] See:
http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/policy_development/communities/Involving_and_collaborating_with_people_in_decision_making.
[13] See:
http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/policy_development/communities/Community_management_and_community_ownership.
[14] See: http://www.mla.gov.uk/what/policy_development/communities/Key_resources.
[15] *Getting it right, and righting the wrongs*. CLG, 2009 (ISBN: 978-1-4098-1518-1). Available to download as a pdf (1709 kb) from:
http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1258299.pdf.
Coincidentally, CLG have just published the Government response to this report, available to download as a pdf (160 kb) from:
http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1528654.pdf, and the Research appendix to this report, available to download as a pdf (2558 kb) from:
http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1528832.pdf.
[16] Thanks to Jenny Ngyou (MLA) for sending the link to this.

Tackling social exclusion – Other Agencies

Doing things differently …

> "In September 2009, the National Skills Forum began an inquiry to investigate how disadvantaged groups are excluded from vocational learning and training opportunities. The inquiry focused on three groups; black and minority ethnic people, offenders and ex-offenders and people with disabilities."[17],[18]

Their final report was published in February – and is available as four separate sections[19]:

- Introductions, recommendations, appendix
- Black and minority ethnic learners
- Offenders and ex-offenders
- People with disabilities.

The *Introductions …* report begins:

> "There has been extensive research into the causes of social exclusion, much of which has identified a lack of skills and other barriers to employment as a key determinant of poverty and alienation. This report focuses on the importance of skills in improving access to employment for three traditionally excluded groups …" [p4]

The report found that, whilst there had been progress for some people within these groups, overall barriers remained; key barriers identified include:

- Attitudinal, such as "societal preconceptions" about their potential
- Institutional, "such as the inflexibility of structures"
- Cultural, "such as the lack of a tradition for participation in certain work sectors".[20]

It also takes a hard-hitting look at the 'target culture':

> "… it has become apparent that many of the initiatives to tackle equality and diversity issues are superficial, focusing only on processes and arbitrary targets …The report also argues that stereotypical assumptions about these vulnerable groups serve to stifle potential by perpetuating low aspiration. We must tackle these attitudes by fostering

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[17] The National Skills Forum is a not-for-profit organisation working in partnership with the Associate Parliamentary Skills Group to raise the profile and status of skills in the UK.
[18] Taken from: http://www.skillsandinclusion.org.uk/background-to-the-inquiry.php.
[19] All four sections can be downloaded from: http://www.skillsandinclusion.org.uk/download-the-report.php.
[20] Quotations from the *Introduction, recommendations, appendix* report, p7.

a culture for equality in learning which goes beyond the structures and processes that are in place." [p4]

The report goes on to make recommendations for each group; these are very much at Government-level, but also highlight the lack of information available to the three groups – a role for us to pick up.

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

The social determinants of health and the role of local government

This is an important new collection of articles[21] from IDeA, which looks at how local authorities can respond to the health inequalities highlighted in the Marmot Report[22].

The paper has three main sections. These are:

Section 1: Exploring the issues

This includes:

- o David Hunter 'What makes people healthy and what makes them ill?' – an overview of the social determinants of health and the potential role of local government
- o Danny Dorling 'Using the concept of 'place' to understand and reduce health inequalities' which "discusses what it would really mean for local authorities to be the 'place-shapers' they aspire to be"
- o Michael Kelly and Tessa Moore 'Making a difference: using NICE guidance and embedding evaluation', in which the authors "look at sources of evidence to which local government can refer to when devising effective interventions and emphasise the importance of local authorities collecting and evaluating their own evidence"
- o Alan Maryon-Davis 'The changing public health workforce', which "looks at the developing roles of directors of public health and other public health professionals"

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[21] Fiona Campbell (ed). *The social determinants of health and the role of local government*. IDeA, 2010. Available to download as a pdf (1300 kb) from: http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/17778155.

[22] *Fair society, healthy lives: the Marmot Review – strategic review of health inequalities in England post-2010*. The Marmot Review, 2010 (ISBN: 978-0-9564870-0-1). Available to download as a pdf (25000 kb) from: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/gheg/marmotreview/FairSocietyHealthyLives. The Review was assessed in *The Network Newsletter*, 105, January 2010, pp9-11 – see: http://www.seapn.org.uk/content_files/files/newsletter_ns_105.pdf.

Section 2: Taking a corporate approach

- John Nawrockyi 'Greenwich – health is everybody's business'
- Tony Hill 'North East Lincolnshire – integrating public health with local government', in which the author "describes his experience of seconding the whole public health team from the PCT to the local authority"
- Martin Seymour 'Embedding health in a vision of 'Total Place'', which "looks at practical implications of the 'Total Place' programme for health, in bringing together all the resources for an area"
- 'Local government – what does it mean for the frontline?', which includes: children's services; adult social care; planning and transport; housing; environmental services; culture and sport; work, worklessness and the local economy.

Section 3: Tools for healthy communities

- Fiona Campbell 'Local public health intelligence'
- John Ashton 'Inequalities, assets and local government – opportunities for democratic renewal posed by the global economic crisis'
- Clive Blair-Stevens 'Integrating social marketing into what we do', which "explores how marketing approaches initially devised in the commercial world can be harnessed by local government and its public sector partners to meet health objectives"
- Charles Loft 'The enforcement role of local government as a tool for health', which "discusses some of the new and imaginative ways in which local authorities are using their enforcement roles in licensing, trading standards and environmental health as tools for health improvement"
- Adrian Davis 'Health Impact Assessment', which looks at the importance of "health impact assessment as a means both of raising awareness of health issues and of evaluating interventions for their effects on health"
- Su Turner 'Using scrutiny to improve health and reduce health inequalities',
- Fiona Campbell 'The local authority as employer', which "is a reminder that local government is in a position to have a direct impact on citizens' health through its role as a major employer across the country".[23]

The section on culture and sport has a strong positive message:

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[23] The quotations used to describe the articles come from the summary version of the report, available to download as a pdf (480 kb) from: http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/17417587.

> "Culture and sport not only alleviate both physical and mental health problems but they are major contributors to the prevention agenda. Getting and keeping people fit and healthy has huge 'upstream' benefits particularly for an increasingly older community." [p51]

although most of the focus is on sport and physical activity; however, a number of the ideas listed could be adapted to programmes within our services. This collection is an important reminder of the key role that local authorities play in challenging health inequality – recommended.

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

A place for culture: developing a local culture offer for all children and young people

The Pupil Guarantee[24], (which was announced in the 21st Century Schools White Paper[25]) pledged that:

> "…through partnership between schools and other external providers (such as libraries, museums and performing arts organisations), every pupil should have access to high-quality cultural activities in and out of school, with an aspiration that, over time, this will reach five hours a week for all." [p4]

This vision document[26] from DCMS and DCSF begins by briefly looking at progress to date, and then draws on the "Find Your Talent" pathfinder projects to "work out how we define what the offer to children and young people should be and how we reach those with least opportunity." [p5]

This starts with a statement of the importance of culture for children and young people, and then goes on to look at how the cultural offer could be targeted (including a mini-case study of the VERVE event at the Fitzwilliam Museum).

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24 *Your child, your schools, our future: building a 21st century schools system – the Pupil Guarantee.* DCSF, 2009. Available to download as a pdf (671 kb) from: http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/8356-DCSF-Pupil%20Guarantee.pdf.

[25] DCSF. *Your child, your schools, our future: building a 21st century schools system.* Cm 7588. TSO, 2009 (ISBN: 9780101758826). Available to download as a pdf (2380 kb) from: http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/21st_Century_Schools.pdf.

[26] *A place for culture: developing a local culture offer for all children and young people.* DCMS/DCSF, 2010. Available to download as a pdf (111.62 kb) from: http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/place_for_culture.pdf.

The paper then goes on to look at how such ambitions can be locally delivered, emphasising both in-school and out-of-school provision, and closely tied into the "Aiming High"[27] agenda.

In order to start getting the best out of arts and cultural organisations, it also states that

> "There are a number of different agencies within the culture sector delivering a wide array of initiatives for children and young people which can sometimes seem uncoordinated and confusing. We want to streamline these structures to create a more joined up experience for children and young people. We will therefore ask the Arts Council England (ACE) to lead a review which will tell us how to create more coherent leadership and delivery of cultural education." [p11]

At the same time, there are already cultural organisations that have

> "… shown that they can offer programmes which deliver tangible benefits for children and young people and have successfully drawn on local funding streams to deliver them." [p11]

including the British Museum's work with Jack Taylor School, and secondary school students from Kent working with a local archivist, historian and planner.

To make all this happen, the Government will:

- "Set out what a good offer looks like from a child/young person's viewpoint.
- Work with and through other partners such as ACE, MLA, English Heritage, CABE, the UK Film Council and the newly formed Cultural Learning Alliance to provide consistent communication on the benefits of cultural learning.
- Expect our delivery partners to ensure that funding for cultural education is used in direct support of the culture offer.
- Continue to build the evidence and knowledge base to show what works best and to ask our delivery partners to work together to build a bank of good practice case studies to demonstrate the value of their work.
- Reinforce the importance of Extended Services in bridging young people's experience in and out of school: regularly communicating with them about the importance of arts and culture.
- Work with the Cultural Learning Alliance to develop networks of Cultural Ambassadors with first-hand experience of the life-changing effects of cultural experiences to drive the formation of strong

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[27] DCSF have also just published *Aiming high for young people – three years on*. DCSF, 2010. Available to download as a pdf (883.24 kb) from: http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/00331-2010DOM-EN.pdf.

partnerships between schools, local authorities and cultural organisations.

- Establish a network of high profile champions to further the cause, working through the Cultural Learning Alliance, chaired by David Puttnam." [p12]

This surely gives rich opportunities for museums, libraries, archives and cultural & heritage organisations to demonstrate their value and role in delivering this enhanced cultural offer.

Abbreviations and acronyms

ACE = Arts Council England
CABE = the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment
CLG = Department for Communities and Local Government
DCMS = Department for Culture, Media and Sport
DCSF = Department for Children, Schools and Families
IDeA = Improvement and Development Agency
ippr = Institute for Public Policy Research
MLA = Museums, Libraries and Archives Council
PCT = Primary Care Trust

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: 0845 128 4897
E-mail: john@nadder.org.uk   March 2010