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

Number 135, July 2012

(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.

Contents List

The Riots, August 2011 – update

Inequality and the 2011 England riots

This Research Digest[1] looks at the key findings of the Government's Riots, Communities and Victims Panel[2] and links them to inequality. The key issues include:

1. "Children and parents: The data shows that where inequality is high, child well-being is low …
2. Building personal resilience: Relative deprivation adds to the stresses of family and community life, so removing the sources of resilience …
3. Hopes and dreams: Inequality is a good predictor of how likely it is that a person who is born poor will stay poor …
4. Riots and the brands: In more unequal countries there is more pressure to acquire expensive symbols of status, and people work the equivalent of 2-3 months more per year in more unequal countries …
5. The usual suspects [criminality]: Increasing inequality brings more crime, including violent and acquisitive crimes …
6. Police and the public: Where inequality is high, there is more deadly use of force on the part of police …
7. Community engagement, involvement and cohesion: Greater inequality reduces social cohesion, weakens community life and lowers levels of trust …" [p1]

The report concludes:

"On the first anniversary of the England Riots of 2011, it is useful to reflect on our society and how income inequality contributed to the outbreak of wide-spread social unrest in the summer of 2011. The evidence shows that income inequality negatively affects **children and parents, personal resilience and hopes and dreams**, and that inequality drives consumerism, that inequality increases **violent crime** and excessive force by **police**. Given this, it is clear that if we want to prevent future unrest and foster a positive, shared society, we should be aiming for a less unequal society, with high levels of trust and **strong communities.**" [p7 – emphases theirs]

---

[1] *Inequality and the 2011 England riots*. The Equality Trust (Research Digest), 2012. Available to download as a pdf (762.36 kb) from: http://www.equalitytrust.org.uk/docs/inequality-and-the-riots.pdf.
[2] *After the Riots. Final Report of the Riots, Communities and Victims Panel.* Riots, Communities and Victims Panel, 2012. Available to download as a pdf (4850 kb) from: http://riotspanel.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Riots-Panel-Final-Report1.pdf.

Did you see …?

Archives Sector Update

The latest issue[3] (and last in this format) includes a very useful summary of the planned relationships between TNA and the wider archives sector, including an outline of their developing engagement role.

Management Today

The latest issue has an interesting article[4] by Denise Kingsmill (in her regular column), "Immigration works", arguing a strong case in favour of the benefits of immigration.

Museums Journal

The latest issue[5] has a number of interesting articles as always, including:

- Eithne Nightingale "Social justice isn't easy, but it's important" ("Comment" column), which introduces the theme of her new book[6] (and one of the themes at this year's MA Conference[7]) [p16]
- Deborah Mulhearn "Safety first", which looks at working with vulnerable people in museums (and includes a brief guide to keeping up-to-date with legislation, sources of information, etc) [pp2831]

CyMAL

The latest issue of the CyMAL magazine[8] has a number of interesting articles and news items, including:

- "Falling in love with Quick Reads", the launch of the Welsh Quick Reads and Stori Sydyn 2012 campaign[9] [p5]
- "Chatterbooks in Welsh", the launch of bilingual materials to support Clonclyfrau/Chatterbooks [p8]
- Alyson Tyler "Libraries Inspire – the way ahead", which outlines the key elements of the new libraries strategy [pp15-17]
- Morrigan Mason "Arteffact: museums and creativity for better mental health" – Arteffact involves a cluster of museums in north Wales that are "piloting a new way of working collaboratively in order to offer a service

---

[3] The National Archives. *Archives Sector Update*, Summer 2012. Available to download as a pdf (3100 kb) from: http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives-sector-update-summer-2012.pdf.

[4] Denise Kingsmill "Immigration works", *Management Today*, July/Aug 2012, p24.

[5] *Museums Journal*, July/August 2012.

[6] Richard Sandell <u>and</u> Eithne Nightingale (eds). *Museums, equality and social justice*. Routledge ("Museum Meanings" series), 2012. There will be an assessment of this book in a future Newsletter.

[7] 8-9 November 2012, see: http://www.museumsassociation.org/conference.

[8] *CyMAL*, 12, Spring 2012. Available to download as a pdf (1570 kb) from: http://wales.gov.uk/docs/drah/publications/120330cymalmag12en.pdf.

[9] Further information at: http://www.wbc.org.uk/ymgyrchoedd-campaigns/storisydyn-quickreads.

that is tailored to reduce symptoms of mental distress through creative engagement."[10]

CILIP *Update*

The July issue[11] includes a number of interesting articles:

- Lyn Rainbow *et al* "Measuring our impact and reaping the rewards", how Medway Libraries and Archives have used a version of Generic Social Outcomes to assess and prove the social value of their work [pp40-41]
- Sue Proctor "Reading stars: getting young people on board" illustrates how North Yorkshire Libraries have involved young volunteers in their Summer Reading Challenge programme [pp42-43]
- There is also a brief news item reporting the launch of a new, joint service provided by health and library staff in Edinburgh, aimed at children and young people with mental health issues [p6].

Society Now

The Summer issue[12] includes the following useful brief articles:

- "Policymakers need to focus on disaffected minority groups" which reports new research that shows that "… in the UK it is Black Caribbeans, not Muslims, who are the group in British society who feel most alienated and disaffected" [p3]
- Martin Ince *et al* "Sixty years of change", looking at changes in British society since 1952 [pp10-17]
- Jake Anders "Mind the gap" ("Opinion" column) which argues that, to tackle the participation gap in higher education, we need to start much earlier than with school-leavers [p19]

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

The atlas of new librarianship

This award-winning[13] atlas[14]:

> "… describes a new librarianship based not on books and artifacts but on knowledge and learning; and [Lankes] suggests a new mission for

---

[10] For further information, see: http://www.bodelwyddan-castle.co.uk/arteffact.html.
[11] CILIP *Update*, July 2012.
[12] *Society Now*, Summer 2012. Available to download as a pdf (3000 kb) from: http://www.esrc.ac.uk/_images/Society_Now_13_tcm8-21683.pdf.
[13] Winner 2012 of the ABC-CLIO/Greenwood Award for the Best Book in Library Literature.
[14] R David Lankes. *The atlas of new librarianship*. MIT Press/Association of College and Research Libraries, 2011 (ISBN: 978-0-262-01509-7), approx £37.95.

librarians: to improve society through facilitating knowledge creation in their communities."[15]

To extend its value, there is also a companion website which serves three purposes:

1. "*As Companion to the Book*: additional materials, extensions, and navigation tools are online and can be used to update content in the book and help you get the most out of the Atlas.
2. *As Classroom*: online videos, links, and activities help make the concepts of new librarianship real.
3. *As Participatory Space*: the Atlas is not complete, and will never be. New librarianship is a dynamic and expanding concept, and it requires your input."[16]

The website links to a number of "Threads" including one called "Improve Society" which has some detailed entries; for example, the entry on "Intellectual Freedom and Safety" includes:

"Self-examination of one's own assumptions and biases is another area the Atlas emphasizes for librarians"[17]

and there is further information (and some resources) for exploring this further.

For us, a key entry is "Social Justice Issues" (by Jocelyn Clark), in which she suggests some broad approaches:

"Broadly speaking, social justice issues reflect movements that push for greater voice and more representation for underrepresented or underpowered communities. Because libraries and librarians are tasked to serve all communities, we are inherently involved with and must be aware of issues of social justice. Ideals near to the heart of social justice advocates are egalitarianism, balance of power, social advocacy, public service, and diversity awareness. All of these issues are reflected in the work that librarians do to serve our communities. Specific social justice issues encompass many areas, and I list a few here just to help guide our thinking: racism, poverty, ageism, immigration policy, sexism, civil rights, mental health activism, homelessness, labor law, environmentalism and environmental justice, and so on. There are many ways in which librarians can address social justice needs with community …"[18]

There is also a useful list of "Conversation Starters".

Jocelyn Clark also recommends a number of resources and further reading, and these include links to blogs (eg "Social Justice Librarian"[19]); to Information for Social Change[20]; and a link to The Network.

---

[15] Taken from: http://www.newlibrarianship.org/wordpress/?page_id=2.
[16] See: http://www.newlibrarianship.org/wordpress/?page_id=2.
[17] See: http://www.newlibrarianship.org/wordpress/?page_id=714.
[18] See: http://www.newlibrarianship.org/wordpress/?page_id=1166.
[19] See: http://sjlibrarian.wordpress.com/.

There are some really interesting articles and ideas in this companion site, well worth exploring.

___

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

Inequalities in health outcomes and how they might be addressed

This new paper[21],[22] from the Children's Commissioner highlights that:

> "Considerable variations exist in both health service outcomes for children, and it follows, their whole-of-life-course outcomes. Variations become inequitable if individuals or groups in a population of community are denied fair access to either determinants of health or lifestyles or services which could improve their life chances and outcomes.
>
> Many children today still do not have access to "three square meals a day" (meaning an adequate diet), a warm coat/new shoes or a quiet place to do their home work." [p3]

It calls on society to make a commitment to tackle these crucial issues, and presents five "overarching recommendations":

1. "Given we know what the problem is, and from all the evidence collected and discussed for many years we know what could fix it, the entire system concerned with wellbeing and health should commission, spend, and evaluate what it does as if fixing the problem of inequalities is its primary intention.

2. The system across all agencies has long accepted the benefits of early intervention and the need for services to work together to ensure that potential issues are dealt with at earliest opportunity to prevent them becoming entrenched and developing into adulthood. The "new NHS" presents ideal opportunities to turn that acceptance into sustainable practice.

3. The child or young person must be a co-constructor of the necessary improvement in equalities, and any gap closing that could achieve this. So are her/his family, a range of health professionals, and a wider group of non-health providers: for example schools, youth services, sports coaches, YOTs, social workers, local authorities' and other bodies'

___

[20] See: http://libr.org/isc/.
[21] Maggie Atkinson. *Inequalities in health outcomes and how they might be addressed*. Office of the Children's Commissioner, 2012. Available to download as a pdf (211.71 kb) from: http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_592.
[22] Source: NCB *Policy & Parliamentary Information Digest*, 3 August 2012.

> neighbourhood support team members, play leaders, NGOs in the
> community and so on.
>
> 4. Given that inequalities discussed in this paper manifest themselves in ill
>   health and poor wellbeing but often arise from other circumstances, an
>   integrated and child centred approach must be judged primarily on the
>   basis of the child's needs and subsequent experiences, not those of the
>   services concerned.
>
> 5. Where partnership structures and practices are already in place they
>   should remain the basis of action to ensure the first three outcomes
>   above: local duties to cooperate, children's trust or partnership
>   arrangements, schools forums, LSCBs must be central alongside HWBs,
>   Healthwatch, localities' Public Health developments, the local CCG
>   landscape and so on. New NHS arrangements must not bypass these
>   existing ones." [pp3-4]

These could well be useful to us in arguing the case for funding/recognition for
areas of our work (and the paper also includes a list of examples of health
inequalities, which again could be valuable to add to any case we are building).

Recommended.

Broader issues – Other Agencies

A framework of outcomes for young people

This new document[23] from The Young Foundation recognises that:

> "… organisations that focus on supporting personal and social
> development have long struggled to provide hard evidence of the value
> of their work. There is a lack of consensus around the outcomes that they
> aim for and are able to deliver, and a lack of consistency in measuring
> these outcomes." [p7

The framework "focuses on social and emotional capabilities – the ability to
function in important ways, to create valuable outcomes, and to navigate
choices and challenges." [p7]

It:

> "… makes the case for why social and emotional capabilities matter, and
> why funders, commissioners and investors should have more confidence
> in their value:

---

[23] Bethia McNeil, Neil Reeder and Julia Rich. *A framework of outcomes for young
people*. The Young Foundation, 2012. Available to download as a pdf (1600 kb) from:
http://www.youngfoundation.org/files/images/ework_of_Outcomes_for_Young_People_
July_2012.pdf.

- it clarifies the key social and emotional capabilities that are significant to and for all young people – so enabling greater confidence and consistency in talking about, and measuring those outcomes
- it highlights the evidence base that links social and emotional capabilities with the short, medium and longer term outcomes that commissioners seek, illustrating why funders, commissioners and investors should have confidence in services that strengthen them
- it outlines an approach to how providers might seek to measure their impact on these capabilities in practice, including how they might identify relevant and useful tools." [pp7-8]

It is based around an outcomes model:

"All outcomes for young people can be mapped into a single conceptual framework defined by two dimensions – the distinction between individual and social outcomes and between intrinsic and extrinsic outcomes …" [p12]

and the remainder of the document sets out a matrix of tools and techniques to use, plus ideas about how to take this forward.

It is not the most straightforward document to use, but, within it, there are lots of useful tools which would help us to make the case more strongly for the work that we do with young people.

Abbreviations and acronyms

CCG = Clinical Commissioning Group[24]
HWBs = Health and Wellbeing Boards
LSCB s = Local Safeguarding Children Boards
MA = Museums Association
NGOs = Non-governmental organisations
TNA = The National Archives
YOTs = Youth Offending Teams

---

[24] See, for example: http://www.commissioningboard.nhs.uk/2012/05/24/ccg-configuration/.