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

Number 142, February 2013

(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

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Did you see …?

Prison Libraries Journal

The latest issue[1] has a couple of good articles:

- A brief article on "Prison Library of the Year" (congratulations to HMP Lewes!) [p9]
- An extremely useful article, "Dyslexia and libraries: how to support users with hidden disabilities", by Jan Seabourne (Dyslexia Action), which clearly explains what dyslexia is (and how there may be "co-occurring difficulties" such as ADD); sets out some of the effects that dyslexia may have on daily life; and then explores the role that libraries can play, including assistive technologies. There is also a list of useful resources and references. Highly recommended. [pp10-12]

Museums Journal

The March issue[2] includes a range of interesting articles, particularly:

- The "Vox pop" debate on "Are the cuts undermining diversity and inclusion work in museums?" [p23]
- Rob Sharp "Impact assessment", which picks up on the discussions highlighted by the Museums 2020 consultation, and argues a strong case for the critical importance of public and social impact, eg "… We should only talk about collections in terms of public impact." (Quoting Hedley Swain) [pp24-29]

ARC Magazine

The March issue[3] focuses primarily on the Community Archives and Heritage Group, and includes an overview of developments over the last ten years by Andrew Flinn [p4]; plus a feature on the first Community Archives and Heritage Group awards shortlist [pp14-15]; and an introduction to their website[4] [pp19-20].

CILIP *CDEG News*

The Spring 2013 emailing includes links to some interesting and useful articles:

- Maureen Hood "Digital Inclusion Dundee – Reaching the Hard to Reach"[5]

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[1] *Prison Libraries Journal*, no.2, 2012. Further information about the Prison Libraries Group and the *Journal* at: http://www.cilip.org.uk/get-involved/special-interest-groups/prison/publications/pages/default.aspx.

[2] *Museums Journal*, March 2013. Further information about *MJ* available at: http://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal.

[3] *ARC Magazine*, no.283, March 2013. Further information about *ARC Magazine* at: http://www.archives.org.uk/publications/arc-magazine.html.

[4] See: www.communityarchives.org.uk.

[5] See: http://www.cilip.org.uk/filedownloadslibrary/groups/csg/inclusion%20dundee.pdf.

- Monna Rizvi "Please Sir, I want some more …"[6], which outlines how the Asian Librarians and Advisers Group got involved in Cityread London 2012, the pan-London celebration of the 200th anniversary of Charles Dickens's birthday.

Tackling social exclusion – Other Agencies

The state of migration: employing migrant workers

This revealing new report[7] from the CIPD draws on survey evidence from 1,000 employers across the UK.

Its main findings are:

- "The employment gap between UK and non-UK born is narrowing, with 72.5% of the former in employment (down from 74%) compared to 67.9% of the latter (up from 64.1%).
- Though growth in migrant worker numbers has slowed in recent quarters it is still increased by 5% over the past year, compared to a 1.5% increase for the UK-born.
- Much of the increase comes from the demand to fill low-skill jobs, most likely to me met from nationals of the EU A8 countries.
- The increased proportion of migrants in low-skilled jobs is partly a reflection of government decisions to restrict the recruitment of non-EU nationals to skilled jobs.
- Looking ahead, six in ten respondents say that they intend to recruit EU migrants who are already in the UK, with the remaining 40% indicating that they will be looking for EU candidates from abroad.
- A third of employers intending to recruit migrant workers report that they will be seeking to recruit non-EU migrants already in the UK, with a quarter saying they will be looking outside the EU for new talent.
- A quarter of employers employing migrants say they use a recruitment agency to do so. Nearly one-third of private sector employers use recruitment agencies compared to on 5% of the public sector doing so.
- 94% of employers using recruitment agencies employ people from the EU 14 countries, 75% recruit from the non-EU, and 61% from the EU A8."[8]

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[6] See: http://www.cilip.org.uk/filedownloadslibrary/groups/csg/cityreadlondon2012.pdf.
[7] *The state of migration: employing migrant workers*. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2013. Available to download as a pdf (3210 kb) from: http://www.cipd.co.uk/binaries/6057%20Migration%20WEB.PDF.
[8] Taken from: http://www.migrantsrights.org.uk/news/2013/new-cipd-report-reviews-recent-trends-employment-migrants-uk?utm_source=Migrants+Rights+News&utm_campaign=995c0ef11f-MRN_News_18-03-2013&utm_medium=email.

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

Protecting library services: how technology can help library services face their current challenges head on

Capita have just published this "White Paper"[9] which offers solutions to the current funding crisis.

Their analysis suggests that:

> "Public libraries are undergoing a process of dramatic reinvention. Hefty budget cuts have meant a period of reflection, forcing library services to question which services they will offer citizens, how they will deliver them and how they can afford them." [p3]

Their 'headline' solution is:

> "In light of these cuts, libraries have two options; either they have to continue to significantly reduce the services they offer to the public, or they have to implement new ways of working to save money."

… which is where this report from Capita comes in!

The report highlights ways of working (not necessarily <u>new</u> ways), including:

- Shared services
- Better use of social media
- A smarter web presence
- Greater use of apps
- More use of self-service
- "The ebook future"
- Greater income generation
- Reducing admin costs.

These are all areas that libraries are already pursuing, to a greater or lesser extent, and the paper is valuable in pulling them together.

However, it is unfortunate that there is no mention anywhere in the paper of the social justice role that libraries play, or how these ways of working may improve libraries' work in this area – or not, thinking particularly of the focus on increasing income generation, which, in the current economic climate, is going to hit hard the very people that we want to attract to our services. Had it included, for example, some analysis of the social benefits of these ways of

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[9] *Protecting library services: how technology can help library services face their current challenges head on*. Capita, 2013. Available to download as a pdf (404 kb) – after logging-on – from: http://www.capita-software.co.uk/news/Pages/protecting_library_services_white_paper_download_request.aspx.

working – and even a question about income-generation – then it could have become a far more powerful and valuable tool.

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"Bookmark Your Library"

The long-awaited website[10] "which promotes the great work and diverse range of facilities and services that are available and take place in libraries around the country" has just been launched.

As the welcome page states:

> "This site is designed to encourage you to engage with libraries, either through joining your local branch library, or making wider use of the facilities available. It is jam packed with information to introduce you to what is available at libraries both locally and nationally, and to help you find everything you need.
>
> This site helps you discover books, explore local libraries, and even lets you get your questions answered by a librarian at any time of the day or night, 24/7, 365 days a year! Why not have a look around today, and see what you can find?"

As such, it has the potential to be a really powerful gateway into library services, and is an exciting initiative.

It is obviously in its infancy, but, so far, presents a fairly 'standard' range of facilities/services. There is a feature about the Stroke Survivors Computer Group in Torbay Libraries[11], but, otherwise, very little of direct social justice relevance; disappointingly, at the time of writing, there is no link to/mention of Share The Vision and work with blind and partially-sighted people (and there may also be issues around the accessibility of the site).

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Programs, partnerships & placemaking: a community development framework for the community-centred library

This report[12] summarises the findings of a study tour funded by the Margery C Ramsay Scholarship (which is awarded by the Australian State of Victoria[13]).

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[10] See: http://www.bookmarkyourlibrary.org.uk/.
[11] See: http://www.bookmarkyourlibrary.org.uk/support-groups.
[12] Catherine Killmier. *Programs, partnerships & placemaking: a community development framework for the community-centred library: Margery C Ramsay Scholarship report 2010*. [details of publisher and date not shown] Available to download as a pdf (1880 kb) from: http://www.libraries.vic.gov.au/downloads/Margery_C_Ramsay_and_Barrett_Reid_Scholarship_Reports/programs_partnerships__placemaking__catherine_killmier_web.pdf.
[13] See: http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/our-community/fellows-scholars/ramsay-reid-scholarships.

The tour of North America looked at public libraries' role in community development (and particularly their significance in "placemaking"), drawing heavily on the work undertaken via the Working Together Project[14] (and also informed by *Open to all?*).

The report concludes:

> "Libraries are integral to the communities they serve. They are important community anchors that provide safe, welcoming destinations for all. Libraries can challenge issues such as social exclusion by being responsive to marginalised as well as mainstream communities. Community-centred libraries are focused on people rather than processes, as people are the reason libraries exist. Community programs, partnerships, and Placemaking are important ways to engage with communities to ensure libraries remain relevant both now and in the future." [p27]

The report concludes with a very useful "Community Development Framework & Toolkit" [pp31-46], developed as a resource for Australian public libraries.

This is an interesting report, showing the influences across the world of work being developed in Canada and the UK.[15]

Abbreviations and acronyms

ADD = Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
CDEG = Community, Diversity and Equality Group
CIPD = Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development

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:

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[14] See for example: http://www.librariesincommunities.ca/resources/Community-Led_Libraries_Toolkit.pdf.
[15] Thanks to John Pateman for alerting me to this.