



The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 330, 4 June 2021

Events

Events have been added to the Courses & Events pages on The Network website – see: <http://www.seapn.org.uk/courses>.

Black Lives Matter

“The black children wrongly sent to 'special' schools in the 1970s”

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-57099654>

(Source: *MEMO [Minority Ethnic Matters Overview]*, 705, 24 May 2021)

BBC article, background to their powerful documentary, *Subnormal: A British Scandal*.

Crisis, communities, change: demands for an equitable recovery

https://www.thersa.org/globalassets/foundation/new-site-blocks-and-images/reports/2021/04/rsa_communities-polling-briefing.pdf

(Source: *Black & Asian News*, 16, Apr 2021)

This Briefing report from the RSA “[...] is an attempt to understand in greater detail how those of ethnic minority backgrounds have been impacted. In the context of a growing body of research that suggests that minority groups have been badly impacted by the pandemic, we hope that this briefing can shed some light on community experiences during the pandemic, and contribute to a conversation on how to best foster an equitable recovery from it.” [p1]

Coronavirus/COVID-19

“COVID-19: how the pandemic increased food poverty in the UK”

https://theconversation.com/covid-19-how-the-pandemic-increased-food-poverty-in-the-uk-161620?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20June%201%202021%20-%201961919236&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20June%201%202021%20-%201961919236+CID_8621f2cb92c33a352c8da4d6ba429435&utm_source=campaign_monitor_uk&utm_term=COVID-19%20how%20the%20pandemic%20increased%20food%20poverty%20in%20the%20UK

(Source: *The Conversation*, 1 Jun 2021)

Important article which outlines the current position in the UK and proposes some solutions:

“Around 8.4 million Britons struggle to get enough to eat, according to the latest figures from the UN, which puts the UK on a par with countries like Latvia and Hungary. This state of affairs is called food insecurity and it

has been on the increase since the 2008 financial crisis and the decade of austerity that followed. But in the last year, COVID-19 has made things worse. Because of the pandemic, more people than ever simply do not have enough to eat.”

Equality Act 2010

“When equalities are marketised, rights suffer”

https://irr.org.uk/article/when-equalities-marketised-rights-suffer/?ml_subscriber=1689974851281885154&ml_subscriber_hash=g0n4&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=stop_and_search_more_concerns_about_pcsc_bill&utm_term=2021-05-24

(Source: *IRR News*, 20 May 2021)

Interesting article which is very critical of some of the recent stances taken by the EHRC, including:

“[...] a formal intervention at the employment appeal tribunal in a discrimination case taken by a woman whose contract was not renewed because colleagues were upset by the climate created at the workplace by her anti-trans views.”

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

Boost: encouraging inclusive culture – baseline report

<https://www.voluntaryarts.org/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=117d0e78-4858-4cec-aa24-882e1400b501>

(Source: MARCH Mental Health Network *Newsletter*, May 2021)

Working with Austria, Denmark, Ireland, Poland and Slovenia:

“The project aims to support lifelong learning providers in the sector of amateur arts, voluntary culture, and heritage to work more consciously and systematically in promoting societal benefits. Up until now, providers in the sector have used many good practice examples as inspiration and support. However, there is a need for more systematic tools and methods for these providers to concretely assess their own activities and then implement improved practices.

The first step, for the project, was to provide a baseline survey to clarify the societal benefits’ categories and levels for subsequent benchmarking. The evidence-gathering process included 30 interviews (6 per country) and 5 focus groups (1 per country), with selected experienced organisers in the field of amateur arts and voluntary culture giving expertise, insight and responses to key research questions.”

[Taken from: https://www.voluntaryarts.org/boost-baseline-report?utm_source=Voluntary+Arts+enews+subscribers&utm_campaign=6068ec0c3e-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2021_03_10_09_08_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_bd6080b4c5-6068ec0c3e-710946369&mc_cid=6068ec0c3e&mc_eid=f75612e375]

The benefits noted are important, but the project should come to life once the recommendations for the measures and best practices to help to boost social inclusion, social cohesion and active citizenship start to appear.

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

EHRC Check on UK Government progress

https://humanrightstracker.com/en/overarching-progress/?mc_cid=04b09c72a9&mc_eid=17c19d737e

(Source: Just Fair Newsletter, May 2021)

The EHRC has just published “[...] a snapshot overview of how well the UK Government is meeting its international human rights obligations.”

As Just Fair say, it “[...] makes for very depressing reading.” There is little overall progress being made, and, in some key areas (such as the Equality and Human Rights legal framework; inclusive education; adequate standard of living and poverty; social care; human rights abuses abroad; immigration; and independent living) the assessment is that there has been regression:

“There has been a sustained or severe regression in the enjoyment of human rights, or a significant reduction in human rights standards or protections in law or policy”.

Ethnicity and child poverty

<https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/ethnicity-and-child-poverty/>

(Source: MEMO [Minority Ethnic Matters Overview], 705, 24 May 2021)

House of Lords Library “In Focus” briefing which draws together evidence of the impact of child poverty on particular communities.

A connected recovery ...

https://www.redcross.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/action-on-loneliness/all-party-parliamentary-group-on-loneliness-inquiry/a-connected-recovery?utm_source=The+Digest&utm_campaign=b9122495e6-The+Digest+22+February+19+COPY+01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1a82d36a80-b9122495e6-110241028##

(Source: Good Things Foundation *The Digest*, 1 Apr 2021)

The APPG on Loneliness has just produced its first report. Key findings include:

- “There are too many barriers preventing people from connecting – such as a lack of safe, welcoming and accessible green spaces, parks and gardens, public toilets, playing areas, local bus services, and ramps for people with disabilities.
- Too many people face barriers to digital connection as a result of lack of access to mobile technology and the internet, as well as a lack of digital skills and confidence.
- Poorly designed or unsuitable housing and neighbourhoods can make it hard for people to meet each other, maintain social connections and develop a sense of belonging.

- Some communities and groups were highlighted as facing particular disadvantage in relation to transport and mobility.”

Recommendations include:

- “Tackle loneliness through national leadership, including re-establishing the cross-government approach to tackling loneliness, long-term funding and improving the evidence base.
- Translate national policy into local action, including incentivising local authorities and their partners to develop local action plans to tackle loneliness.
- Invest in the community and social infrastructure needed to connect, particularly in areas with higher levels of deprivation. This should include a long-term investment in the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector to realise the full potential of social prescribing – a flagship of the Government’s original loneliness strategy.
- Loneliness proof all new transport and housing developments, and close the digital divide by increasing digital skills and confidence.”

Emerging together: the Tackling Loneliness Network Action Plan

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emerging-together-the-tackling-loneliness-network-action-plan/emerging-together-the-tackling-loneliness-network-action-plan#theme1>

(Source: MARCH Mental Health Network *Newsletter*, May 2021)

DCMS have just published this Action Plan.

Key actions include:

1. “Bringing together funders interested in social connection to share learning and look for opportunities to align and join up funding where possible.
2. Creating volunteering opportunities that build connection, particularly for people experiencing loneliness
3. Exploring a range of opportunities to tackle digital exclusion, including how government’s Inclusive Economy Partnership can facilitate high-impact partnerships between government, business and civil society to support digital inclusion”

For its first year, the Tackling Loneliness Network will focus on:

1. Tackling loneliness in young people
2. Tackling loneliness in older people
3. Local and place-based approaches to tackling loneliness
4. Digital inclusion

These four actions were, in turn, grouped into two themes:

1. Supporting organisations to tackle loneliness
2. Supporting individuals to tackle loneliness.

There is an outline of the work that is intended to develop over the next year, together with the announcement that:

“Government will shortly be launching a new digital platform, the Tackling Loneliness Hub, to support organisations interested in tackling loneliness to share evidence, insights and ideas. The Hub will be run by Campaign to End Loneliness and What Works Centre for Wellbeing and will support organisations to expand their networks and identify new opportunities for partnership working at both a local and a national level. Through increased access to research, guidance and best practice, organisations will have the opportunity to increase their understanding of loneliness and what works to tackle it.

DCMS will use the Tackling Loneliness Hub to gather insights on people’s individual experiences of loneliness and what they feel will make the most difference to them.”

NB Fuller assessment to appear in *The Network Newsletter*.

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies

Out of bounds: equity in access to urban nature

<https://www.groundwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Out-of-Bounds-equity-in-access-to-urban-nature.pdf>

(Source: *Equally Ours Newsletter*, 24 May 2021)

Subtitled “An overview of the evidence and what it means for the parks, green and blue spaces in our towns and cities”, this interesting report looks access to nature:

“During the Covid-19 pandemic, many people have become more aware of the nature on their doorstep and more dependent on it for recreation, exercise, and social contact. But the benefits of spending time in nature are not distributed equitably, with many losing out because of a lack of suitable, good-quality local provision or more complex societal barriers.

Urban nature takes many forms, including:

- green spaces, such as parks, nature reserves, community gardens, city farms, and woodland
- and blue spaces, such as rivers, lakes, ponds, canals, and the sea.

This evidence review is particularly interested in publicly accessible green or blue space which everyone is entitled to make use of, rather than private spaces such as gardens or golf clubs.” [p2]

The report’s findings include:

- “People from all walks of life value access to nature but not everyone is able to benefit to the same extent
- The Covid-19 pandemic has made these inequalities more pronounced
- People from low income households or areas, people from ethnic minority backgrounds and disabled people are among the groups currently missing out
- Inadequate provision of parks and green spaces is one of the reasons, but people also experience complex barriers when it comes to accessibility, relevance and feeling safe
- Equitable access to public space is a right, so everyone managing natural spaces should be working to address this inequity” [Taken from: <https://www.groundwork.org.uk/about-groundwork/reports/outofbounds/>]

Disability issues – Other Agencies

“Google Teams Up With Sight Loss Charity RNIB To Create Accessible Storytelling Website”

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/gusalexiou/2021/05/20/google-teams-up-with-sight-loss-charity-rnib-to-create-accessible-storytelling-website/?sh=1658d6351c68>

(Source: *Share the Vision Newsletter*, 307, May 2021)

“Google has joined forces with the U.K.-based sight loss charity RNIB and *The Guardian* newspaper to launch Auditorial, an experimental, ultra-accessible online storytelling experience.”

See: Auditorial, <https://auditorial.withgoogle.com/>.

Migration issues – News

the other side of hope: journeys in refugee and immigrant literature

<https://othersideofhope.com/index.html>

(Source: email from Paul Dudman via REFUGEE-RESEARCH@JISCMail.AC.UK, 24 May 2021)

“[This] is a UK-based literary magazine edited by refugees and immigrants. We exist to serve, via words, the refugee and immigrant communities worldwide.

We publish in print annually and online periodically [...]

the other side of hope is funded by Arts Council England, and supported by ArtReach and Journeys Festival International.”

“Migration and innovation”

<https://socialeurope.eu/migration-and-innovation>

(Source: email from Social Europe, 1 Jun 2021)

Interesting article, based on recent research:

“The bad news for Germany’s sophisticated economy is innovation by indigenous Germans is declining. The good news is migrants are more than compensating.

In March, Uğur Şahin and Özlem Türeci of BioNTech received Germany’s Federal Cross of Merit for their patent-protected development of the world’s first Covid-19 vaccine. The two are emblematic of the indispensable contribution migration now makes to Germany’s strength in innovation [...]

Migration issues – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

“Local Authority Network Position Statement on NRPF”

<https://la.cityofsanctuary.org/2021/05/13/local-authority-network-position-statement-on-nrpf>

(Source: City of Sanctuary *Newsletter*, Jun 2021)

The City of Sanctuary Local Authority Network has drafted a statement about the impact of the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) policy, and are calling on the Government to:

- “Extend the ‘everyone in’ policy and provide sufficient funding to address the ongoing Covid-19 related service pressures;
 - Suspend NRPF conditions entirely to allow people access mainstream benefits (not just the lift on housing restrictions);
 - Retain the pause on evictions for people who have been refused asylum and work with local authorities to ensure there is smooth transition for people who have been granted leave to remain;
 - Retain access to free schools meals for all children whose parents have irregular immigration status and meet the financial eligibility threshold.”
- [p2]

Migration issues – Other Agencies

“Confronting hate against east Asians – a photo essay”

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2021/may/19/confronting-hate-against-east-asians-a-photo-essay>

(Source: MEMO [*Minority Ethnic Matters Overview*], 705, 24 May 2021)

“Anti-Asian racism and crimes against the Asian community have amplified with Covid. The photographer Wendy Huynh, whose parents are Chinese immigrants from Vietnam who moved to France to flee communism, has experienced racism in Paris and London. She created a series of portraits celebrating Asian women in London from the creative industry to tackle the issue, and the Guardian talked to some of them about their experiences.”

Refugee Week 2021: “Activities and Ideas to Inspire Schools”

<https://schools.cityofsanctuary.org/2021/05/10/refugee-week-2021>

(Source: City of Sanctuary *Newsletter*, Jun 2021)

New resource from Schools of Sanctuary:

“Refugee Week 2021 runs from 14th-20th June and has the theme of “We Cannot Walk Alone”. This page hopes to inspire and guide you as you consider how your school can recognise and participate in Refugee Week this year.”

Resources for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month

<https://schools.cityofsanctuary.org/2021/05/26/resources-for-gypsy-roma-and-traveller-history-month-june>

(Source: City of Sanctuary *Newsletter*, Jun 2021)

Another new resource from Schools of Sanctuary – and they begin by asking why it’s important that Schools of Sanctuary learn about GRT History Month:

“Firstly, we see Schools of Sanctuary as those that are welcoming and inclusive to all people – both those who have sought sanctuary – and those from other marginalised and misrepresented backgrounds. Secondly, whilst many Gypsies, Roma and Travellers are from the UK, some flee to the UK as refuge from policies and community maltreatment even worse than those they face the UK. The Roma in particular, are often very poorly treated in a variety of countries in Europe and come to the UK to escape the daily discrimination they experience there. Whilst they may not be arriving in the UK as asylum-seekers or refugees (at least pre-Brexit), that does not mean they are any less seeking sanctuary.”

Changing the conversation on asylum: a messaging guide

https://www.freedomfromtorture.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/Full%20Report%20-%20Changing%20the%20Conversation%20on%20Asylum%20-%20Freedom%20from%20Torture_1.pdf

(Source: City of Sanctuary *Newsletter*, Jun 2021)

“This messaging guide is a tool to help the refugee and migrant advocacy sector to think tactically, play to our strengths and win. We’ll look at the current communication problems facing the sector, and the methodology and messages that can help us carve out a new approach that will be successful in persuading the public.” [p4]

LGBTQ+ issues – Other Agencies

Inclusivity: supporting BAME trans people

https://www.gires.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/BAME_Inclusivity.pdf

I attended an event at Exeter University, where Sabah Choudrey spoke about “Trans Joy”. They have written a guide, supported by GIRES, which was published in 2016 – but which I hadn’t come across before:

“This is a guide for LGBTQ and trans community groups, societies,

organisations and charities to help you find answers to questions such as:

- Why are there no or few BAME trans people in my group?
- Why are there no or few BAME volunteers or workers in my organisation?
- How can I support a BAME trans person who attends my group?" [p5]

Free to be: strategy 2021-25

https://www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/stonewall_strategy_2021-5_1.pdf

(Source: *Stonewall Supporter Newsletter*, 24 May 2021)

Launch of the new Stonewall strategy:

“At Stonewall, we stand for all lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning, and ace (LGBTQ+) people.

We imagine a world where LGBTQ+ people everywhere are free to be themselves and can live their lives to the full.

We know that, as part of a vibrant global movement for change made up of LGBTQ+ people, our allies, families, and friends, we will get there. Together.” [p2]

Broader issues – Other Agencies

The community paradigm: why public services need radical change and how it can be achieved

<https://www.newlocal.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/The-Community-Paradigm-New-Local-2.pdf>

(Source: message from Simon Wallace, 22 May 2021)

A reprint (with new intro) from New Local (formerly the New Local Government Network). Based on work since the first publication, this revised version identified five routes to community power transformation. These include:

- Organisational culture change
- Macro-decision making: “Within councils and other public service institutions, we see a growing interest in working with communities on big choices rather than marginalising them.” [p7]
- Transforming micro-decision making
- Transfer of money or assets
- Community governance.

A guide to effective case studies

<https://whatworkswellbeing.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/case-study-guide-Apr2021-1.pdf>

(Source: NCVO *Impact round-up*, 20 May 2021)

Useful practical guidance:

“This guide will help you bring together what you have learned about a project or activity in a structured, clear and thorough way, so that you can communicate helpful insights to other practitioners, funders, researchers and the communities you work with.” [p1]

It also includes a template for creating a project case study.

Inspiring Impact have also produced some guidance on producing case studies – see: <https://www.inspiringimpact.org/learn-to-measure/do/case-studies/>.

Inspiring Impact: “Established in 2012, Inspiring Impact is delivered by a coalition of six organisations across the UK: Community Evaluation Northern Ireland, Evaluation Support Scotland, NCVO Charities Evaluation Services, NPC, Social Value UK, and Wales Council for Voluntary Action.” [Taken from: <https://www.inspiringimpact.org/about-us/>]

And, finally ...

“The deep roots of Labour's red wall decline”

<https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/brexit-news/peter-kellner-on-the-labour-party-crisis-7960234>

(Source: *The Campaign Company Weekly*, 14 May 2021)

I'm including this as I'm a bit fed up with all the simplistic knee-jerk reactions to the recent round of elections, and think it's a very interesting take on the changing nature of UK elections – and throws a lot of light on some of the more fundamental changes to UK society.