

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

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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.

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## Did you see ...?

### **CILIP Update**

The June issue<sup>1</sup> has a number of interesting news items and articles, including:

- “Dementia information service is Scottish first”, a brief news piece about Dundee’s dedicated dementia service [p9]<sup>2</sup>
- “Advocates for freedom of access to information”, interview with Shami Chakrabati prior to the CILIP Conference [pp18-19]
- Brian Ashley “Good for you – and for the economy”, which introduces ACE’s new report<sup>3</sup> [pp30-31]
- Dawn Woods and Rachel Sharpe “Partnership opens up new horizons”, which looks at a successful Summer Reading Challenge partnership between Worcestershire libraries and Croome Court (a National Trust property) [p34]
- John Crawford, Christine Irving and Lauren Smith “Information literacy in Scotland: making it mainstream”, which reports on the “Right Information: Information skills for a 21<sup>st</sup> century Scotland” online community of practice<sup>4</sup> [pp41-43].

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## Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies

### ***Ready to read: closing the gap in early language skills so that every child in England can read well***

This is an important new report<sup>5</sup> from the Read On. Get On. campaign, which:

“[...] explains why children’s early language skills are so important for learning to read and why children growing up in poverty face a bigger risk of falling behind. It sets out the action that is needed – focusing particularly on the poorest children – to ensure that every child in England gets the best start when it comes to developing their language skills.

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<sup>1</sup> *CILIP Update*, June 2015. For further information, see:

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/cilip/membership/membership-benefits/monthly-magazine-journals-and-ebulletins/cilip-update-magazine>.

<sup>2</sup> See also: <http://dundee.stv.tv/articles/1321604-dundee-central-library-first-in-scotland-offer-dementia-information-service/>.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel Fujiwara, Ricky Lawton and Susana Mourato. *The health and wellbeing benefits of public libraries: full report*. Arts Council England, 2015. Available to download as a pdf (1260 kb) from:

[http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/Health\\_and\\_wellbeing\\_benefits\\_of\\_public\\_libraries\\_full\\_report.pdf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/Health_and_wellbeing_benefits_of_public_libraries_full_report.pdf). Summary paper (294.7 kb) available at: [http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/Health\\_and\\_wellbeing\\_benefits\\_of\\_public\\_libraries\\_summary\\_paper.pdf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/Health_and_wellbeing_benefits_of_public_libraries_summary_paper.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> See: <http://www.therightinformation.org/>.

<sup>5</sup> Jerome Finnegan and Hollie Warren. *Ready to read: closing the gap in early language skills so that every child in England can read well*. Read On. Get On., 2015. Available to download as a pdf (1410 kb) from:

[http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/images/Ready\\_to\\_Read.pdf](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/images/Ready_to_Read.pdf).

With levels of child poverty set to rise significantly in the next five years, it is crucial that we act now to ensure that young children growing up in poverty have the best early learning opportunities – at home and at nursery.” [p viii]

It begins by setting out the latest data on the challenge that we face, identifying which children are most at risk of falling behind, and why this matters for being able to read well at age 11.

The report then looks at the key influences on young children’s language development, highlighting the crucial role of parents and the impact of poverty.

In Chapter 4, the report:

“[...] explores how we can meet the challenge. It sets out how high-quality services and support for families can help overcome the impact of poverty. It highlights the potential for services – including early education, health visiting, libraries and children’s centres – to support young children’s language development, and explains why this potential is not always fulfilled. The report ends in chapter 5 by setting out three priorities for government: investing further in the early education workforce; strengthening support for parents, especially in public health services and children’s centres; and making sure that, as a country, we can track the progress we are making to improve young children’s language skills.” [pp ix-x]

This report helps create recognition of the work we do across the sector to encourage children’s early language skills and to support the development of reading. Recommended.

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### ***Solutions from the frontline ...***

This new paper<sup>6</sup> from the Making Every Adult Matter Coalition<sup>7</sup>:

“[...] sets out how policy makers, local authorities, commissioners and frontline services can respond to the challenges faced by people experiencing multiple needs.” [p3]

It has nine recommendations “based on the ideas and experiences shared by people with experience of multiple needs, and the staff who support them.” [p4].

These are:

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<sup>6</sup> *Solutions from the frontline: recommendations for policymakers on supporting people with multiple needs*. MEAM Coalition, 2015. Available to download as a pdf (1030 kb) from: <http://www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/basic/files-downloads/solutions-from-the-frontline-web.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> “Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) is a coalition of Clinks, Homeless Link and Mind, formed to improve policy and services for people facing multiple needs. Together the charities represent over 1,300 frontline organisations and have an interest in the criminal justice, substance misuse, homelessness and mental health sectors.” [p2]

## **“Listen to frontline voices and tackle stigma**

### *Nationally:*

Ministers should identify a structured way to listen to the voices of people with multiple needs and the frontline staff who support them, to ensure that policies properly reflect their experiences and meet their needs.

### *Locally:*

Public bodies and services should review their training for all practitioners coming into contact with people with multiple needs so that they are able to understand their experiences.

### *At the frontline:*

Services should extend work and volunteering opportunities for people with experience of multiple needs, for instance as peer mentors, and create opportunities for progression within their organisations.

## **Deliver flexible and more joined-up services**

### *Nationally:*

Government should ensure that funding structures prioritise recovery and rehabilitation and allow local areas to develop a flexible response. As part of this, it should consider a new national focus on multiple needs.

### *Locally:*

Commissioners should be accountable for ensuring local areas have joined-up services, and identify where people with multiple needs fall through the gaps.

### *At the frontline:*

Services should involve staff and people with multiple needs in designing programmes and the environments where they are delivered. They should give practitioners the freedom to build rewarding relationships with those they work with.

## **Support people towards independence**

### *Nationally:*

The Department for Work and Pensions should ensure Jobcentre Plus and Work Programme providers can provide appropriate, flexible and personalised support to help people with multiple needs move towards independence.

### *Locally:*

Local authorities should consider how to improve their work with the private rented sector to increase access for people with multiple needs to good-quality accommodation.

### *At the frontline:*

Services should increase provision of specialist support on benefits and accommodation issues to people with multiple needs.” [pp4-5]

Multiple needs<sup>8</sup> are defined as:

“People facing multiple needs are in every community in Britain and it is estimated that 58,000 people face problems of homelessness, substance misuse and offending in any one year.

Within this group, a majority will have experienced mental health problems. Women are under-represented in these figures, but despite this face significant and distinct challenges which need to be met. Similarly, people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities experience a range of social inequalities which contribute to their experience of multiple needs.” [pp6-7]

The paper includes short case studies, and lots of quotes from people’s experiences of service-provision. The recommendations are extremely useful for us in (re)shaping our services. Recommended.<sup>9</sup>

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## Diversity in books and other materials for children & young people<sup>10</sup>

### “A Diverse Book List for the Under-Five Set”

This is a new US booklist<sup>11</sup>:

“The aim of this compilation is not to address every possible configuration of diversity, but instead to offer titles for the sub five-year-old set that showcase “different” in a positive, broad, or subtle way.”

It lists books in the categories: Different families/friends/concepts/cultures/ views/expectations.

It also includes weblinks to other useful resources.

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<sup>8</sup> There is further information about people with multiple needs in England in: Glen Bramley and Suzanne Fitzpatrick *et al.* *Hard edges: mapping severe and multiple disadvantage in England*. LankellyChase Foundation, 2015. Available to download as a pdf (5710 kb) from: [http://www.lankellychase.org.uk/assets/0000/2858/Hard\\_Edges\\_Mapping\\_SMD\\_FINAL\\_VERSION\\_Web.pdf](http://www.lankellychase.org.uk/assets/0000/2858/Hard_Edges_Mapping_SMD_FINAL_VERSION_Web.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> Source: National Alliance for Arts in Criminal Justice *News*, Jun 2015.

<sup>10</sup> There has been a sudden growth in the number of articles and other resources available, so it seems timely to add this as a new section in the Newsletter.

<sup>11</sup> Lisa G Kropp. “A diverse book list for the under-five set”, *School Library Journal*, 4 Aug 2015, <http://www.slj.com/2015/07/feature-articles/a-diverse-book-list-for-the-under-five-set/>.

## Health & Wellbeing issues – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

### The Arts Council's Research Grants Programme 2015-18

"The Arts Council's Research Grants Programme 2015-18 aims to deepen knowledge and understanding of the impact of arts and culture and the complex role it plays in our experience as individuals and on the fabric of our society [...]"

Round 1 of the programme will invest almost £1.4 million in eight research partnerships across England, involving small, medium and large-scale arts and cultural organisations. The projects will explore the value of the arts and museums from a diverse range of perspectives and disciplines. The research will enhance the evidence-base, support artistic practice, influence policy and decision-making, and influence commissioners and funders."<sup>12</sup>

Eight applicants have been successful in Round 1.<sup>13</sup> As these initiatives provide exciting opportunities for collaboration and learning, details are included here:

#### **People United (£108,190)**

A two-year research project with the School of Psychology at the University of Kent, testing how effectively the arts can influence pro-social motivations such as cooperation, helping, kindness, generosity, and solidarity. The focus of the research study will be People United's 'The Best of Us' project in Newington, Thanet. The research will compare people living in two districts – the district where the project takes place, Newington, and a control comparison district, Dover.

#### **Royal College of Music (£199,916)**

A two-year research study called 'Singing the Blues', with Imperial College London and the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital. The research will be a world-first study to investigate the impact of group singing activity among mothers experiencing Post-Natal Depression (PND). The research will collect psychological, physiological, and biological data in a randomised control design. This will be supplemented by a national study tracking the interactions between mental wellbeing, symptoms of PND, and involvement in music interventions in women during pregnancy and the first year of motherhood.

#### **Plymouth Music Zone (£152,236)**

A two-year research study with Plymouth University, exploring how to include and make music with those whose communication is non-verbal such as people with Dementia, Autism, Cerebral Palsy, elective mutes, brain injury, Stroke/Aphasia, and sensory impairments. It will focus on deepening understanding of the role the 'unspoken' plays in music making – including with those who do not/cannot speak, while seeking to

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<sup>12</sup> Taken from: <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/apply-funding/funding-programmes/research-grants-programme-2015-18/>.

<sup>13</sup> Source: email from Museums Association, 24 Jun 2015.

articulate how that happens.. The findings will have implications for addressing the 'unspoken' within inclusive practice across the arts and cultural sector and how this helps practitioners in fields such as health and education.

#### **Arvon Foundation (£159,188)**

A two-year research study with the University of Exeter and Open University. The research will investigate the relationship between taking part in arts and cultural education and increased writing skills and development for students aged 8-14 from areas of socio-economic disadvantage in rural and coastal areas in South West England. Specifically, the study will investigate the impact of writers' engagement with teachers on: a) writers' effectiveness in supporting young people; b) teachers' pedagogic practices and identity as writers; and c) students' attainment in writing.

#### **The Whitworth Art Gallery (£192,101)**

A three-year research partnership also involving Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums, and researchers from University College London (UCL). The research project, 'Not so grim up North', will be an evaluation of culture and health programmes in Manchester and Tyne and Wear. This research seeks to fill gaps in the evidence base for understanding the value of museum encounters on health and wellbeing. The study will identify the critical success factors for museums in health programming and evaluation, and explore how findings can feed into broader regional and national agendas.

#### **Yorkshire Dance (£100,000)**

A two-year research study with the School of Biomedical Sciences at the University of Leeds, exploring the impact of a youth dance programme for 11-19 year-olds living in deprived neighbourhoods in Eastern Leeds. The research will involve tracking of young people over 12 months, involving those undertaking the dance programme and a control group. The study will explore the holistic benefits of dance programmes for young people in deprived communities, aiming to explore health, well-being, social, behavioural and emotional outcomes.

#### **Royal Shakespeare Company (£296,985)**

A three-year mixed-methods study also involving Tate and partnering with the School of Education at the University of Nottingham. The research will involve a cohort study based in 30 secondary schools across England and will provide a detailed evidence base about the direct impact of arts and cultural experiences on teachers and the direct and indirect impact on pupils (aged 11-18). The research will track teachers and pupils across the 30 schools over a three-year period. The research will include schools from across the country that serve inner city, rural and regional communities. The research will help address the dearth of robust international research evidence about arts experiences and education.

#### **Unitas (£181,200)**

A three-year research project with the Law School from the University of

Derby, investigating the impact of arts and culture on young people (aged 4-18) in the youth justice sector. The focus will be on their engagement and achievement in education, training and employment and their offending, following participation in Summer Arts Colleges (SACs). SACs are three week full time structured arts programmes, delivered during school holidays for young people in the community youth justice system.”<sup>14</sup>

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## Health & Wellbeing issues – Other Agencies

### ***National Literacy Trust Hubs: understanding the role of literacy in public health***

This new paper<sup>15</sup> from the NLT argues that low literacy levels have a negative impact on the health of communities in the UK.

“Health literacy strategies are multidimensional, and it is important to recognise that multiple factors impact individual health literacy, including basic numeracy and ICT skills, confidence, contextual health knowledge and the accessibility of information itself. Today, those living in the poorest neighbourhoods of the UK have a life expectancy on average seven years shorter than those in the wealthiest [...] In addition to this inequality, the NHS faces significant challenges, and could experience up to a £30 billion funding gap by 2020 [...] For these reasons, strategies aimed at improving health literacy offer the potential to empower individuals and communities to take control of their own health, tackle health inequalities and reduce pressure on public services.

Improving literacy skills must fundamentally underpin health literacy strategies. Evidence demonstrates the direct relationship between literacy and health literacy and it is widely recognised that educational interventions play a central role in promoting and strengthening health literacy. Building the foundations for health literacy in early child development, developing and supporting health-promoting school approaches (including building literacy, numeracy and ICT skills), and addressing the barriers to adult learning are evidence based approaches for improving health literacy [...] Other sources show that qualifications are the most important driver of health literacy [...] while informal lifelong learning such as daily reading, and formal, structured learning are considered to be likely to facilitate the development and maintenance of health literacy skills [...] [p3]

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<sup>14</sup> Taken from: <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/apply-funding/funding-programmes/research-grants-programme-2015-18/round-1-successful-applicants/>.

<sup>15</sup> Joe Morrisroe. *National Literacy Trust Hubs: understanding the role of literacy in public health*. National Literacy Trust, 2015. Available to download as a pdf (474.26 kb) from: [http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0002/7394/National\\_Literacy\\_Trust\\_Hubs\\_health\\_and\\_literacy\\_paper\\_FINAL\\_updated.pdf](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0002/7394/National_Literacy_Trust_Hubs_health_and_literacy_paper_FINAL_updated.pdf).

Having set the broad scene, the paper then looks in more detail at the NLT Hubs approach:

“Currently, three Hubs have been established in the UK; first in Middlesbrough in 2013, with two further Hubs launched in Bradford and Peterborough in 2014 [...]

National Literacy Trust Hubs are designed to create long-term change in communities across the UK where low levels of literacy are entrenched, intergenerational and seriously impacting on people’s lives. Our policies aim to tackle intergenerational low literacy by mobilising schools, public services, businesses, communities, and cultural, faith and voluntary groups in a campaign focusing on improving literacy levels in a local area.” [p5]

The paper includes two case studies, showing more about how these operate, and then goes on to outline a “shared agenda for literacy and public health” which will include:

- “The National Literacy Trust will publish an interim evaluation report of our impact in our Hubs in Middlesbrough, Bradford and Peterborough in the autumn 2015.” [p8]
- Launch of a national health and literacy campaign in partnership with Boots Opticians
- Read On. Get On. calls for greater collaboration between public health and education in the early years.

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### ***Literature review: the impact of reading for pleasure and empowerment***

The Reading Agency has recently published this literature review<sup>16</sup> carried out by BOP Consulting. It:

“[...] surveys research into the effects of reading for pleasure on people of a range of age groups and requirements. Among the benefits it finds are improved social capital for children, young people and the general adult population; better parent-child communication and reduction of depression and dementia symptoms among adults.

Another key finding of the report is that enjoyment of reading is a prerequisite for all these positive outcomes: people who choose to read, and enjoy doing so, in their spare time are more likely to reap all of these benefits.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> *Literature review: the impact of reading for pleasure and empowerment*. The Reading Agency, 2015. Available to download as a pdf (998.58 kb) from: <http://readingagency.org.uk/news/The%20Impact%20of%20Reading%20for%20Pleasure%20and%20Empowerment.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> Taken from: <http://readingagency.org.uk/news/media/reading-for-pleasure-builds-empathy-and-improves-wellbeing-research-from-the-reading-agency-finds.html>.

The outcomes are particularly highlighted in a blogpost<sup>18</sup> by Dawn Finch (Vice-President of CILIP and a member of the project steering group):

“These outcomes include; greater knowledge of other cultures, improved social wellbeing, social relatedness and increased empathy. When we looked at the impact of reading for pleasure on people with increased health needs or issues, the report found that people who were reading for pleasure demonstrated better health literacy and were more able to cope with, and access, information related to their conditions. The report also found evidence of more personal outcomes in the field of adults with health needs, such as reduced depressive symptoms, reduced dementia symptoms, a greater sense of personal and social belonging, as well as general relaxation and escapism.

For children and young people the evidence showed that reading for pleasure not only increased educational attainment, but also had a beneficial effect on the enhancement of emotional vocabulary. Children and young people who read for pleasure were better able to communicate and demonstrated a greater level of emotional understanding of others. Children and young people who read for pleasure were consistently likely to achieve higher scores at school, but were also more likely to use positive mental self-imagery and generally used more positive vocabulary. It confirmed that children’s literature can be used as a model for analysing everyday emotional processes, and can support emotional development. This in turn demonstrates that reading for pleasure is an important way of combating issues such as social isolation, teenage depression, and social and educational disengagement.”

This report is the first stage of a broader piece of work, the long-term goal of which is to create a reading outcomes framework which will enable libraries, schools, etc to evaluate the impact of their work.

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## Abbreviations and acronyms

ACE = Arts Council England

CILIP = Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals

NLT = National Literacy Trust

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<sup>18</sup> Dawn Finch. *Reading for pleasure and empowerment*,  
<http://www.cilip.org.uk/cilip/blog/reading-pleasure-empowerment>.