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

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Tackling social exclusion – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

Scottish index of multiple deprivation 2012 ...

The Scottish Government has just published this new tool¹. The Index can be used for:

- “identifying areas with high levels of deprivation
- identifying areas which may be deprived on specific domains (e.g. health) even if they are not considered deprived on the overall index

¹ *Scottish index of multiple deprivation 2012: a National Statistics Publication for Scotland*. Scottish Government, 2012 (ISBN: 978-1-78256-258-0). Available to download as a pdf (2230 kb) from: http://22fa0f74501b902c9f11-8b3fbddfa1e1fab453a8e75cb14f3396.r26.cf3.rackcdn.com/simd_448749_v7_20121217.pdf.

- comparing all the datazones in Scotland in order to identify the most/least deprived
- comparing local authorities (or other larger geographical areas) by looking at the proportion of most deprived datazones contained in each of the areas ...” [p4]

“The most deprived datazone in Scotland ... is ... the Ferguslie Park area of Paisley, Renfrewshire This datazone was also the most deprived in Scotland in SIMD 2006 and was ranked 2nd most deprived in SIMD 2009.

The other datazones in the list of top five most deprived datazones in SIMD 2012 include:

Possil Park, Glasgow City (datazone S01003582, ranked 2nd)
 Keppochhill, Glasgow City (datazone S01003564, ranked 3rd)
 Paisley Ferguslie area, Renfrewshire (datazone S01005265, ranked 4th)
 Parkhead West and Barrowfield area, Glasgow City (datazone S01003253, ranked 5th).” [p7]

Useful background for planning targeted services.

Tackling social exclusion – Other Agencies

Monitoring poverty and social exclusion 2012

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has just published its annual “Monitoring Poverty” report².

The key findings are:

- “The composition of those in poverty is very different today than 10 or 20 years ago. The proportion of pensioners in poverty has halved since the early 1990s, while that of working-age adults without children has risen by a third.
- Over half of children and working-age adults in poverty live in a working household. In-work poverty has been rising steadily for at least a decade.
- Poverty is no longer concentrated in the social rented sector. The numbers of private renters in poverty are now as high, having doubled in the last decade.
- Health inequalities between deprived and non-deprived areas have grown in the last decade. A man in one of the least deprived areas can expect to live longer than a woman in one of the most deprived areas.

² Hannah Aldridge, Peter Kenway, Tom MacInnes and Anushree Parekh. *Monitoring poverty and social exclusion 2012*. JRF, 2012. Available to download as a pdf (4000 kb) from:

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/MPSE%202012%20Bookmarked%20REVISED.pdf>.

Summary also available to download as a pdf (400 kb) from:

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/poverty-exclusion-government-policy-summary.pdf>.

- Some 6.4 million people now lack the paid work they want. There are 1.4 million part-time workers wanting full-time work – the highest figure in 20 years.
- The populations of people in poverty and those out of work are not static. While one in six people live in low income at any one time, around one in three has had a spell in low income over a four year period.
- Similarly, while 1.6 million people are claiming Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA) at any one time, 4.8 million have claimed JSA at least once in the last two years.
- The welfare cuts so far are likely to hit low-income households more than once, through changes to both income-related and housing benefits. Changes to disability benefit could mean low-income disabled people being hit even harder.”³

Are ‘cultures of worklessness’ passed down the generations?

JRF have also just published this important research⁴ which investigates the idea of ‘intergenerational cultures of worklessness’ and if there are families where ‘three generations have never worked’ (as the media often cite). The report is based on research with families living in deprived neighbourhoods in Glasgow and Middlesbrough.

However:

“Despite strenuous efforts, the researchers were unable to locate any such families. Even two generations of complete worklessness in the same family was a very rare phenomenon, which is consistent with recent quantitative surveys of this issue.” [Summary, p1]

What researchers did find was that:

“Rarely were there simple explanations for why individuals in the middle generation [aged from late 30s to mid-50s] had such extensive records of worklessness. Typically, a range of problems associated with social exclusion and poverty combined to distance people from the labour market. These problems included, but were not limited to:

- poor schooling and educational underachievement
- problematic drug and alcohol use
- the attraction of opportunities in illicit economies (such as drug dealing) when legitimate opportunities were scarce

³ Taken from: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/monitoring-poverty-2012>.

⁴ Tracy Shildrick, Robert MacDonald, Andy Furlong, Johann Roden and Robert Crow. *Are ‘cultures of worklessness’ passed down the generations?* JRF, 2012. Available to download as a pdf (553.32 kb) from: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/worklessness-families-employment-full.pdf>. A summary is available as a pdf (230.57 kb) at: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/worklessness-families-employment-summary.pdf>.

- criminal victimisation
- offending and imprisonment
- domestic violence, and family and housing instability
- physical and mental ill health.” [Full report, p4]

They also found:

“... no evidence to support the idea that participants were part of a culture of worklessness, and none for the idea of intergenerational cultures of worklessness. Despite their long-term worklessness, parents actively strove for better for their children and often assisted them in searching for jobs. Young people in these families described wanting to avoid the poverty, worklessness and other problems that had affected their parents. Running directly counter to theories of intergenerational cultures of worklessness, the research found that conventional, mainstream attitudes to and values about work were widespread in both the middle and younger generations. Employment was understood to offer social, psychological and financial advantages (compared with worklessness and a reliance on benefits). Interviewees knew it was better to be in work than to be out of work, partly because of the deep and long-term poverty that extensive worklessness had brought to these families.” [Full report, p5]

“The key conclusion, therefore, is that politicians and policy-makers need to abandon theories – and policies flowing from them – that see worklessness as primarily the outcome of a *culture* of worklessness, held in families and passed down the generations. If these cultures cannot be found in the extreme cases studied here, they are unlikely to explain more general patterns of worklessness in the UK.” [Summary, p4 – emphasis theirs]

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