

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

Number 64, November 2006

(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.

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Did you see ...?

“Waking up to a surveillance society”

There has been considerable media coverage¹ of this important new report² which suggests that the increases in surveillance in the UK also lead both to increased exclusion for some people and to differentiating services and access to them based on who you are.

“Surveillance varies in intensity both geographically and in relation to social class, ethnicity and gender. Surveillance, privacy-invasion and privacy protection differentiate between groups, advantaging some and, by the same token, disadvantaging others.” [p5]

“Discrimination, in the form of differential speed, ease of access and various degrees of social exclusion is a major outcome of the social sorting processes produced by surveillance. Governmental logic has changed. While older, twentieth century understandings of citizenship stressed the *inclusion* of all eligible persons in systems of health, welfare and legal protection, newer citizenship practices, including ID systems, seem to stress *exclusion* of undesirable elements ... Those with access to resources are highly mobile – international businesspersons, tourists and the like – and their identification systems

¹ For example: Jason Bennetto “Big Brother Britain 2006 ...” *The Independent* 2 November 2006, pp8-9; Rob Evans and “Spy planes, clothes scanners and secret cameras: Britain's surveillance future” *The Guardian* 2 November 2006 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/humanrights/story/0,,1937192,00.html>; Directgov, 2 November 2006 http://www.direct.gov.uk/N11/Newsroom/NewsroomArticles/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=10040669&chk=7emdZC.

² Kirstie Ball and David Murakami Wood (eds). *A report on the surveillance society for the Information Commissioner by the Surveillance Studies Network: summary report*. Information Commissioner’s Office, 2006. Available to download as a pdf from: http://www.privacyconference2006.co.uk/files/report_eng.pdf. There is also a public discussion version available at: http://www.privacyconference2006.co.uk/files/discussion_eng.pdf.

(from credit cards to frequent flyer cards) tend to accelerate ease of movement. But for others, who are working (or worse, unemployed) migrants, refugees or asylum seekers, not to mention those with distinctive 'Muslim' or 'Arab' names, these systems tend to militate against movement both within and between countries." [pp13-14]

"The intensified surveillance of urban life also involves powerful processes of social exclusion. This is characterised by the creation of disconnections for those people and places deemed in some way unprofitable or risky. Crucially, then, the new surveillance technologies can thus forcibly *slow down* certain people's lives, making them logistically more, not less, difficult ... Exclusion is also found in the pricing structures for goods. With Amazon.com already shown to be selling DVDs to different customers at different prices, the question is raised whether regulatory intervention might be necessary to ensure that mass commercial pricefixing does not emerge." [p14]

To accompany this, *The Independent*, in its "The big question" column³, looks at the pros and cons of the DNA database and raises some worrying issues, eg:

"There are 24,000 under-18s in the United Kingdom who have committed no crime and have not even been in court, but whose DNA is being held in the database ... At least one third of young black men have had samples taken, many after being targeted through stop-and-search legislation. That is more than 10 times the proportion of Afro-Caribbeans in the population at large. This disparity both reinforces and results from a stereotype that black people are more likely to commit crimes than white people ..."

"Setting the pace ..."

MLA London have launched their prospectus⁴ for the contribution of MLAs in London to the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games – aims include:

- Inspiring and engaging the youth of the world
- Celebrating world cultures and the diversity of the UK
- Leaving a lasting legacy.

The MLA Partnership's vision is that MLAs will ensure that the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games are inclusive events. If you would like to comment and/or contribute ideas, please complete the online survey at <http://settingthepace.mla.gov.uk>. The deadline for responses is 1 December 2006.

³ Nigel Morris. "What is the DNA database, and why do we have so many people on it?" *The Independent* "The big question" column, 2 November 2006, p45.

⁴ http://www.mlalondon.org.uk/uploads/documents/MLA_London_2012_Prospectus.pdf.

Equality Manifesto for Wales

This manifesto⁵ has been produced by a partnership of Wales's equality organisations, with the aim of highlighting the equality issues that will make a real difference to people in Wales.

Your chance to tell us what you think

The Commission on Integration and Cohesion has just launched its consultation paper⁶ – the closing date for responses is **Monday 19th January 2007**. I'm drafting a response from The Network, which I will circulate to Network members for comments (and so you can lift anything from it that might be useful in your own responses) before submitting it.

Freedom's orphans

You may have seen the media coverage of this key new report from ippr⁷, which looks at the current concerns about young people and asks what lies behind them – “are young people in the UK facing a genuine crisis? Or is this merely another bout of largely unfounded concerns regarding delinquency, rebellion and immorality?” [p1]

The report suggests that one major issue is social immobility:

“The roots of social immobility lie undeniably in structural causes: social class remains the most powerful explanation of behaviour and outcomes. But young people are not passive recipients of social forces beyond their control. They make and remake their lives within these structures. Our research suggests that as our society has changed radically over the past 30 years – under the influence of a range of demographic, socio-economic and cultural developments that have affected all capitalist democracies – the current conception of what young people need in order to meaningfully exercise agency (their capacity to choose and realise decisions), and the role of the state in supporting them, is increasingly anachronistic. In addition, the way young people are socialised by society has fundamentally changed. As a result, many young people today are left simply incapable of succeeding in the current socio-economic climate.” [pp2-3]

⁵ *Who are you talking to? Equality manifesto for Wales Welsh Assembly elections 2007*. Equal Opportunity Commission Wales, 2006. Available to download as a pdf (223 Kb) from: http://www.eoc.org.uk/pdf/Equality_Manifesto_for_Wales.pdf.

⁶ *Your chance to tell us what you think*. Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2006. Available to download as a pdf (200 Kb) from: http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/316/CommissiononIntegrationandCohesionYourchancetotelluswhatyouthink_id1504316.pdf.

⁷ Julia Margo, Mike Dixon, with Nick Pearce and Howard Reed. *Freedom's orphans: raising youth in a changing world*. ippr, 2006 £12.95 (ISBN: 186030303x). Further information from: <http://www.ippr.org/publicationsandreports/publication.asp?id=496>.

The report makes a series of recommendations to find ways of:

- Preventing childhood consumerism
- Reducing teenage pregnancy
- Ensuring fair opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities
- Promoting positive activities via the voluntary sector
- Extending asset-based welfare, particularly for children in care
- Improving teaching and learning
- Harnessing and shaping peer effects within schools
- Improving dissemination of best practice
- Supporting communities in developing collective efficacy.

More than the sum ...

This new report⁸ from the Audit Commission⁹ looks at the external factors contributing to school success.

The introduction states:

“... improving schools and improving the prospects of the most disadvantaged pupils in schools is not a matter for schools alone or for schools supported only by external education professionals. The council as a whole, along with its wider partners, including the voluntary sector, has a key role in helping to create the infrastructure and conditions which maximise schools’ chances of success.

... School improvement and renewal are inseparable issues from neighbourhood improvement and renewal, particularly in the most disadvantaged areas. While schools are profoundly affected by their neighbourhoods, they equally have a key role in promoting cohesion and building social capital ... for example by taking part in local regeneration schemes, offering adult education and helping families to access other local public services, such as health and childcare ...

... Arts, sports and recreation services can support schools in many ways. They may provide additional facilities or resources to deliver the curriculum. They may help build children’s confidence and self-esteem in a different context from the classroom, and give disaffected young people a more constructive alternative to crime and anti-social behaviour. They also offer enjoyment, widen children’s experience and offer potential career opportunities.” [p6]

⁸ *More than the sum: mobilising the whole council and its partners to support school success.* Audit Commission, 2006. Available to download as a pdf (243 Kb) from: <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/Products/NATIONAL-REPORT/79BCF4AB-DF36-47d8-8EEC-4C1B2621990F/MoreThanThe%20Sum.pdf>.

⁹ Further background information is available in the press release at: <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/reports/PRESS-RELEASE.asp?CategoryID=PRESS-CENTRE&ProdID=71DD1C3B-96E6-4503-9CAB-B322AF93E45A>.

The report goes on to outline what good practice could look like, and draws on a number of case studies to illustrate what is happening already.

The Big Lottery Fund Community Libraries Programme

Just in case you haven't seen the coverage of this¹⁰, the BLF's Programme has now been launched¹¹.

“Partnership for Patients”

This new project¹² will allow members of the public as well as people from socially excluded groups (eg BME people, older people, rural communities and people with disabilities) to access choice of health provider through their local library.

The project will be piloted in 27 libraries with three libraries in each of the pilot areas. The pilot areas are Derbyshire, Gloucestershire and seven London boroughs: Bromley, Southwark, Newham, Hackney, Greenwich, Haringey and Waltham Forest.

The scheme will advertise choice options in libraries through choice-trained librarians, broadband enabled computers, plasma screens, banners and poster publicity.

Tackling social exclusion – Libraries, Museums and Archives

Review of museums, libraries and archives activity with children and young people

MLA North West, MLA and Renaissance North West have just published this review¹³ which sets out the main strengths, weaknesses and gaps in the

¹⁰ For example, “£80m fund open at last”, CILIP *Update*, 5 (11) November 2006, p2.

¹¹ Further information from: http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/pr_091006-eng-cl-libraries_broaden_community_footprint_with_80_million?fromsearch=-uk.

¹² For more information, see:

[http://www.mla.gov.uk/webdav/harmonise?Page/@id=82&Section\[@stateId_eq_left_hand_root\]/@id=4289&Document/@id=26516](http://www.mla.gov.uk/webdav/harmonise?Page/@id=82&Section[@stateId_eq_left_hand_root]/@id=4289&Document/@id=26516).

¹³ Burns Owen Partnership. *Review of museums, libraries and archives activity with children and young people: final report*. MLA NW/MLA/Renaissance NW, 2006.

Available to download as a pdf (588 Kb) from:

http://www.mlanorthwest.org.uk/assets/documents/1000029F060809MLANWCYPFI_NALReport.pdf. There is also a *Children and young people briefing note* (55 Kb)

available from:

<http://www.mlanorthwest.org.uk/assets/documents/1000029EbriefingCYPreport.pdf>;

and an *Executive summary* (84 Kb) available from:

http://www.mlanorthwest.org.uk/assets/documents/100002A0060809MLANWCYPFI_NALExecSummary.pdf.

evidence base for the sector against current policy for children and young people (eg “Youth Matters, “Every Child Matters”).

The review sets out the policy context, including an assessment of MLAs’ role within it:

“The move towards multi-agency working that is exemplified in the ECM programme and a number of current DfES policies means that there is a major opportunity for the museum, library and archive sector to become more involved in joint working for delivering services and activities for children and young people.

This engagement must be proactive, as it will not happen as a matter of due course. Museums, libraries and archives are not core partners within Children’s Trusts, have no legislative duties with regard to children and young people, and are therefore not automatically present within the regime of inspection and performance management developed for ECM.” [Executive summary, p11]

It then assesses and makes recommendations to improve the evidence base; and, finally, suggests that MLAs have an “offer” to make which could include:

- Language acquisition and the ability to learn
- Literacy development
- Curriculum support
- Recreation
- Participation
- Non-cognitive skills development
- Personalised learning provision.

[also from Executive summary, p11]

Pink Lincs

Local LGBTs, in partnership with a Lincolnshire County Libraries and Learning working group, have created a website¹⁴ where Lincolnshire LGBTs can record their life stories; the website is funded by the Community Council of Lincolnshire and North Kesteven District Council.

As David Millar of South Lincs Gay Man Talking says:

“The internet has huge advantages for anyone reluctant to ‘come out’ in what can be a hostile environment. Going on line, telling our own histories – and reading others – will make the County’s history complete. Without our stories, Lincolnshire life simply isn’t complete”.¹⁵

¹⁴ See: <http://www.pinklincs.com/hom.cgi>.

¹⁵ Source: Lincolnshire Libraries press release.

Tackling social exclusion – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

“Sport Playing its Part”

Sport England have recently published a series of advocacy documents, showing the contribution that sport can make. These include:

- Building safe, strong, sustainable communities¹⁶
- Meeting the needs of children and young people¹⁷
- Healthier communities¹⁸
- Economic vitality¹⁹
- Executive summary²⁰.

Tackling social exclusion – Other Agencies

ChildLine Casenotes

ChildLine have published three reports²¹ to date, which are drawn from calls received – the reports provide key background information and recommendations for action²².

¹⁶ *The contribution of sport to building safe, strong and sustainable communities.* Sport England, 2006. Available to download as a pdf (773 Kb) from: http://www.sportengland.org/spip_safe_strong.pdf.

¹⁷ *The contribution of sport to meeting the needs of children and young people.* Sport England, 2006. Available to download as a pdf (834 Kb) from: http://www.sportengland.org/spip_children_and_young_people.pdf.

¹⁸ *The contribution of sport to healthier communities.* Sport England, 2006. Available to download as a pdf (534 Kb) from: http://www.sportengland.org/spip_healthy_communities.pdf.

¹⁹ *The contribution of sport to economic vitality and workforce development.* Sport England, 2006. Available to download as a pdf (565 Kb) from: http://www.sportengland.org/spip_economic_vitality.pdf.

²⁰ *Executive summary: the contribution of sport to community priorities and the improvement agenda.* Sport England, 2006. Available to download as a pdf (843 Kb) from: http://www.sportengland.org/spip_exec_summary.pdf.

²¹ *Alcohol and teenage sexual activity.* NSPCC, 2006. Available to download as a pdf (877 Kb) from: http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/publications/downloads/WD_CasenotesAlcoholAndTeenageSex_gf32473.pdf.

What children and young people tell ChildLine about physical abuse. NSPCC, 2006. Available to download as a pdf (905 Kb) from: http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/publications/downloads/WD_CasenotesPhysicalAbuse_gf32474.pdf.

Calls to ChildLine about sexual orientation, homophobia and homophobic bullying. NSPCC, 2006. Available to download as a pdf (920 Kb) from: http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/publications/downloads/WD_CasenotesSexualOrientation_gf37413.pdf.

²² Source: the National Youth Agency's *e-youthAction*, 19.

Young people and custody

The Howard League for Penal Reform has just published two reports which highlight the issues facing young people and their families:

- *Chaos, neglect and abuse*²³ looks at the major gaps in planning and provision of support by local authorities for young people leaving custody
- *When big brother goes inside*²⁴ looks at the effects on young offenders' siblings.²⁵

The Governments and Communities in Partnership Conference

This Conference, held in September, brought together key policy-makers, community leaders and researchers from across Australia, and experts from the UK, Ireland, Austria, Canada, the United States and New Zealand. The aim of the programme was to deepen the academic and policy debate about the impact and value of efforts to 'join-up' different public services and related initiatives to strengthen communities. Synopses of and links to most of the papers are available at <http://www.public-policy.unimelb.edu.au/conference06/presentations.html>.²⁶

Amongst the interesting papers is one²⁷ looking at the rhetoric and performance in Irish efforts to tackle social exclusion. This looks critically at the implementation of the Irish National Anti-Poverty Strategy, and suggests that:

“At national level in Ireland it is clear that there is a new ‘common sense’ approach to policy making, accompanied by new and increasingly embedded institutional rules. However, at implementation level it could be argued that the ‘all change no change’ description most aptly suits. Similarly, the local level experience in certainly illustrates a renewed focus on rules of representation and decision

²³ *Chaos, neglect and abuse*. Howard League for Penal Reform, 2006. £15.00 (ISBN 13: 978-0-903683-94-4). Further information available at: <http://www.howardleague.org/index.php?id=youngpeople>.

²⁴ *When big brother goes inside: the experiences of younger siblings of young men in prison*. Howard League for Penal Reform, 2006. £10.00 (ISBN 13: 978-0-903683-95-1). Further information available at: <http://www.howardleague.org/index.php?id=youngpeople>.

²⁵ Source: *YoungMinds Magazine* 85, November/December 2006.

²⁶ Source: Policy Hub *Bulletin*, October 2006 – see: <http://www.policyhub.gov.uk/bulletins/index.asp>.

²⁷ Maura Adshead and Chris McNerney. *Mind the gap – an examination of policy rhetoric and performance in Irish governance efforts to combat social exclusion: refereed paper presented to the Governments and Communities in Partnership Conference, Centre for Public Policy, University of Melbourne, 25-27 September 2006*. Available to download as a pdf from: <http://www.public-policy.unimelb.edu.au/conference06/Adshead.pdf>.

making alongside the gradual reassertion of more traditional institutional rules. In this regard it may be the case that the “all change, no change” scenario most aptly describes the reality at local governance level in Ireland. Therefore while recognising the merits of the governance processes that are in place one is left with the nagging fear that they may be more cosmetic than real.

... From a social inclusion perspective it is questionable if limited institutional tinkering is adequate to meet the considerable income and non income challenges that still remain.” [p23]

The paper [p23] also quotes Helen Sullivan:

“... tackling social exclusion requires action on many fronts simultaneously. However to achieve social inclusion as a result necessitates a programme of reform that tackles the institutions of the powerful and the powerless. Unless changes are sought in the behaviours, structures and processes of those whose actions exclude, there is a danger that all that will result from policies to tackle social exclusion is a pathologising of the excluded.” [p507]²⁸

There is also an interesting paper²⁹ looking at the notion of “hard-to-reach” communities, which argues that:

“... it is argued that it is important for councils to not merely play a passive role in providing opportunities for citizen involvement. The issue of hard to reach can be seen in this context. To facilitate representative and effective participation, local councils need to reach out to their communities and provide avenues and support to engage them in ways that are suited to them. It is not the community that are hard to reach, but rather hard to reach is symptomatic of councils’ failing to reach out to actively solicit involvement from representative community segments. So beyond providing opportunities for involvement, effective participation requires councils to build their own capacity to conduct consultation and reach out to the community ...” [p17]

Another paper³⁰ describes the collaborative process by which refugee communities, NGOs and government agencies worked together to develop an

²⁸ Helen Sullivan. “Modernisation, neighbourhood management and social inclusion”, *Public Management Review* 4, 2002, pp505-528.

²⁹ Nicola Brackertz. *Hard to reach? Engagement, governance and community consultation in Victorian local government: refereed paper presented to the Governments and Communities in Partnership Conference, Centre for Public Policy, University of Melbourne, 25-27 September 2006*. Available to download as a pdf from: <http://www.public-policy.unimelb.edu.au/conference06/Brackertz.pdf>.

³⁰ Joy Wilson, Sue Driver and Ali Koos. *Nothing about us, without us: a description of an inter-sectoral collaborative approach in Wellington, New Zealand: unrefereed*

action plan for refugee health and wellbeing in the Wellington (NZ) region. As the summary of the paper notes:

“Features of the process include:

- Refugee community-centred process
- Acknowledgement of the need to work across the sectors to bring about effective action and change
- An on-going commitment to dialogue
- On-going engagement and relationship building taking place across the settlement sector
- Action orientated
- Time and “space” for flexibility and responsiveness, innovation and creativity

Results of the process have included:

- Increased awareness raising across the sectors on refugee resettlement issues
- An increasing sense by the refugee community of shared participation and action
- A dynamic action plan developed with over 75 actions across 6 sectors that include capacity building, housing, economic wellbeing, living well, knowledge and skills, and safety and security
- The development of the Wellington ChangeMakers Forum
- High levels of energy and commitment
- Effective and efficient use of scarce resources”.³¹

Mike Geddes (Warwick University) gave a keynote presentation³² which:

“... reviews recent English experience of partnership and community engagement during the period of office of the New Labour governments since 1997 ... It argues that there have been certain gains, including a greater voice for community organisations, more

paper presented to the Governments and Communities in Partnership Conference, Centre for Public Policy, University of Melbourne, 25-27 September 2006. Available to download as a pdf from: <http://www.public-policy.unimelb.edu.au/conference06/Wilson.pdf>.

³¹ Taken from: <http://www.public-policy.unimelb.edu.au/conference06/presentations.html>.

³² Mike Geddes. *Evaluating English experience of governments and communities in partnership: the empire strikes back? Paper for Governments and Communities in Partnership Conference, Centre for Public Policy University of Melbourne, 25-27 September 2006. Available to download as a pdf from: <http://www.public-policy.unimelb.edu.au/conference06/Geddes.pdf>.*

joined up local strategies, and improved trust within local governance networks. But these have been limited and patchy: while a 'virtuous circle' of positive partnership working can be discerned in some localities, in others a number of factors such as ineffective leadership, the limited resources and capacity of partnerships, and unresolved issues of accountability, combine in a 'vicious circle' in which the transaction costs of partnership working outweigh the benefits. In general, while it should be recognised that building effective partnerships takes time, there are as yet relatively few substantial examples of hard outcomes demonstrating the added value of partnership working." [p2]

What works in stimulating creativity amongst socially excluded young people

The NFER have recently published this research report³³ which combines a review of the literature with an evaluation of five NESTA-funded projects.

The research found a real lack of literature on this topic (and noted that creativity is often seen as a process rather than as an outcome in its own right). In terms of what seems to work, it found that the following are key factors:

- Authenticity, including work having some contemporary relevance to young people, and practitioners that possess the necessary expertise and knowledge to fuel the enthusiasm of young people in creative activities
- Something different, offering a new and alternative kind of learning experience for example in terms of location, approach, atmosphere, different art-forms
- 'Significant other': "Where young people are supported by adults, try to identify the traits and skills that these individuals will need in order to establish positive and productive working relationships. For example, the ability to relate to disadvantaged young people and have an understanding of the issues faced would clearly be advantageous. Furthermore, access to appropriate professional development for mentors/staff will help ensure that they are equipped to work with this target group."
- Exploring ideas
- Challenge: "... Projects would therefore need to assess how socially excluded participants can be encouraged to 'take risks' (especially if they have little experience of this in the past) and to set an appropriate level of challenge for them."
- Working with others
- Time

³³ Karen Halsey, Megan Jones and Pippa Lord. *What works in stimulating creativity amongst socially excluded young people*. NFER, 2006 (ISBN 9: 1-905314-30-2). Available to download as a pdf (1.17 Mb) from: <http://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/pdfs/downloadable/nes.pdf>.

- Tools and skills: “Access to the basic tools and skills of creativity can play an instrumental role in creativity projects. For instance, investment in new equipment such as the latest software, media and professional materials, alongside guidance in using them, can serve as important foundations for the development of creativity.”³⁴

Broader issues – Other Agencies

Different world ...

A new report³⁵ from the City Parochial Foundation calls for:

“... a new consensus on the content and purpose of youth work to be based on citizenship, social change and the creation of a better world.

Youth work practitioners need to be more creative in working with young people, making more use of positive peer-influence, the arts and sport, commercial marketing methods, and new media communications such as texting and blogging ...”^{36 37},

Neighbourhood play and community action

JRF have just published a report³⁸ which looks at the effects of a children’s play project on the neighbourhoods involved.

Over a two-year period, from September 2002, the Children’s Play Council worked with five community groups to pilot and test materials for a Neighbourhood Play Toolkit.

“The Neighbourhood Play Toolkit development project began as a process aimed at developing and testing materials for use by local groups, supporting them in developing play spaces and play opportunities in local neighbourhoods. But in actuality it was more than that. It was a tool for building social capital and for enriching the lives of

³⁴ Quotations taken from the summary available at: <http://www.nfer.ac.uk/research-areas/pims-data/summaries/research-project-to-identify-what-works-in-stimulating-creativity-amongst-socially-excluded-young-people.cfm#conclusions>.

³⁵ Gerard Lemos and Francis Bacon. *Different world: how young people can work together on human rights, citizenship, equality and creating a better society*. City Parochial Foundation, 2006. Full report available to download as a pdf from: http://www.cityparochial.org.uk/cpf/20%20Publications%20&%20research/Diff_World.pdf; summary report from: <http://www.cityparochial.org.uk/cpf/25%20Whats%20New/DiffWorld%20summary%20Nov06.pdf>.

³⁶ Taken from: <http://www.cityparochial.org.uk/cpf/publications/>.

³⁷ Source: the National Youth Agency’s *e-youthAction*, 19.

³⁸ Haki Kapasi. *Neighbourhood play and community action*. JRF, 2006 (ISBN-13: 978-1-85935-522-0; ISBN-10: 1-85935-522-6). Available only to download as a pdf (110 Kb) from: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/1685-development-play-community.pdf>.

all those who took part and were impacted on by the project and its outcomes. Some of the pilot projects' steering group members lived in stressful situations, with poor-quality housing, low incomes and few neighbourhood facilities. Yet they were able to reach beyond themselves and look to the whole of their neighbourhood. They were driven by a vision for improving the lives of the children in their area. This vision led them to be positive, overcome setbacks, find solutions and make a difference. Their own reflections on their learning showed deep levels of awareness, wisdom and generosity in sharing their learning with others.

The Neighbourhood Play Toolkit development project was a catalyst that ignited their enthusiasm and harnessed their potential and energy. They used all the opportunities, partnerships and resources available to them to achieve their vision. Their participation brought real and positive changes to the neighbourhoods in which they lived.”³⁹

Abbreviations and acronyms

CILIP = Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals
ECM = Every Child Matters
JRF = Joseph Rowntree Foundation
LGBT = Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered
MLAs = Museums, libraries and archives
NESTA = National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts
NFER = National Foundation for Educational Research

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November 2006

³⁹ Taken from: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/housing/1942.asp>.

Your Place Or Mine?

Engaging New Audiences with Heritage



A national conference run by English Heritage and the National Trust

In November 2006, English Heritage and the National Trust held a national conference at Manchester Town Hall entitled '**Your Place or Mine? Engaging New Audiences with Heritage**'. It was a two day event that explored one of the biggest issues in the heritage sector today – how do we reach out to wider audiences and tell the stories of the diverse communities who make up our society?

Over 350 practitioners and policy makers from heritage, museums, cultural and community organisations shared ideas, learned new skills and debated the big questions that engaging new audiences with heritage challenges us to explore:

- Whose story are we telling?
- Do we need to redefine 'heritage'?
- What do roots, identity and sense of place mean in today's society?

There were practical workshops covering topics from how to engage young people with heritage to involving communities in re-interpreting historic properties, from understanding the needs of different social and cultural groups to embedding culture change across organisations.

Although the conference has finished, the discussions have only just started and we want to hear your thoughts on the questions that the conference was exploring:

- How can we bring new audiences to heritage? And why are we trying to do this?
- What's the impact on people and society if we do?
- What does heritage mean to people?
- Whose story are we telling?
- Do we need to re-define heritage?
- How do we change as organisations in order to respond to different views of heritage?

Whether or not you attended the conference, you can get involved and join in the debate on the conference blog site. Just go to www.english-heritage.org.uk/yourplaceormine and click on the blog link.

We want to keep the issues live and dynamic, so this is your chance to have your say but also to read about every session that took place, with downloadable handouts from the workshops as well as summaries from the panel debates, interviews with key speakers, photos and audio.

Keep your eye on the blog as we'll be continuing to upload content in the future as well as hosting live web chats and other chances for you to join in the debates.

Miriam Levin
November 2006

A summary of Stockport Library & Information Service's Black History Month activities

Stockport Library and Information Service celebrated Black History Month this year with popular activity sessions for children. Three different sessions took place to encourage children of different ages, and their parents and carers, to "follow the thread to Stockport's cotton past".



Each session included stories and the chance to help make the library freedom quilt.

The quilt, based on the Afro Caribbean slave tradition of quilt making as a map to freedom, will include prints depicting images of when the children feel most free e.g. playing in their garden, stroking their hamster etc.



Once all the pieces have been assembled the quilt will be displayed in libraries. Accompanying the quilt is a book of fabric pages describing the story behind the quilt and the images included in it.



Stockport has black minority ethnic communities of less than 4% of the total population (2001 Census). Community outreach work has shown pleasing results with the numbers of people from black and minority ethnic communities joining the library, exceeding this figure in recent years. An important aspect of the library service involvement in Black History Month in Stockport is in raising awareness throughout our community, helping to break down any barriers and promote community cohesion.

All the events were jointly provided by the Library Service and Community Heritage staff.

Maria Nother
November 2006