

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

**Number 83, March 2008**

(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](http://www.seapn.org.uk) and includes information on courses, good practice, specific socially excluded groups, as well as the newsletter archive.

---

## **Contents List**

### **Did you see ...?**

- Community cohesion – page 2
- CILIP *Update* – page 2

### **National Year of Reading – page 3**

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

- Landmark Archives Awards – page 3

### **Tackling social exclusion – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government**

- *The Sure Start journey* – page 4
- Equality Impact Assessments – page 4

### **Tackling social exclusion – Other Agencies**

- *Challenging prejudice ...* – page 4

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

- *Professional development workbook* – page 5

### **Broader issues – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government**

- Sustainable Communities Act – page 6
- The Customer Excellence Standard – page 6
- *A passion for excellence: an improvement strategy for culture and sport* – page 7
- *Delivering Local Area Agreements: the contribution of cultural activity* – page 13

**Abbreviations and acronyms** – page 14

## Did you see ...?

### Community cohesion

This is really just for background information; DIUS have launched a consultation document<sup>1</sup> for Further Education providers, seeking their views on their role in promoting community cohesion.

### CILIP Update

The latest issue<sup>2</sup> has a number of interesting articles, including;

- “Now: something completely different” [p15] – an introduction to the new Library Benchmark (the tool that has replaced Public Library Service Standards)
- “Youth services blossom, thanks to QLP-Y leadership project” [pp16-17] – key lessons learned from the evaluation of the Quality Leaders Project – Youth)
- John Pateman “Hey, Minister – leave those books alone” [pp20-21] – a critique of MLA’s consultation document<sup>3</sup> on public libraries’ management of controversial materials
- “Is there a shared agenda for public libraries?” [pp22-23] – an interview with Tony Durcan, President of the Society of Chief Librarians
- Antonia Gray “Make a Book: hands-on reading” [pp40-41] – outline of work carried out by Slough Library and a school for children with special needs

<sup>1</sup> *The role of further education providers in promoting community cohesion, fostering shared values and preventing violent extremism: consultation document*. DIUS, 2008. Available to download as a pdf (332 kb) from:

<http://www.dius.gov.uk/publications/extremismfe.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> *Library + Information Update* 7 (3), March 2008.

<sup>3</sup> *Consultation on draft guidance on the management of controversial material in public libraries*. MLA, 2008. Available to download as a pdf (115.67 kb) from:

[http://www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//C/controversial\\_material\\_12579.pdf](http://www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//C/controversial_material_12579.pdf). The

consultation closes on 7 April – for further information, please see:

[http://www.mla.gov.uk/website/news/press\\_releases/controversial](http://www.mla.gov.uk/website/news/press_releases/controversial). The Network’s

response is available at:

[http://www.seapn.org.uk/content\\_files/files/controversial\\_stock\\_in\\_public\\_libraries.doc](http://www.seapn.org.uk/content_files/files/controversial_stock_in_public_libraries.doc).

c.

- Sarah Mears “Class visits: a partnership to broaden horizons” [pp42-43] – outline of the work that Essex Libraries have been doing to develop class visits into workshops with specific teaching and learning outcomes.
- 

## National Year of Reading

NYR launches publicly on 31 March, and the website is now fully up-and-running at: <http://www.yearofreading.org.uk/>.

April will see the first ever national library membership campaign promoted by the National Year of Reading. 25 April is the national launch of the membership campaign, and 26 April will be promoted as the national *Join a library* day.

**National Year of Reading Wales** launched on 13 March, and further details are available on their website at: <http://www.yearofreadingwales.org.uk/>.

---

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

### Landmark Archives Awards

The Third Annual Landmark Archives Awards ceremony was held at London Metropolitan Archives on 12 March 2008. The initiative is a partnership between London Metropolitan Archives and Archives for London.

David Mander OBE, Chair of Archives for London, presented the award to rukus! Federation for “In This Our Lives – The Reunion 2007”.

“In This Our Lives” celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first and only National Black Gay Men’s Conference, 1987, and brought together some of the past original attendees for an informal discussion and reception. The event was filmed and will be available for sale in the near future.

rukus! have also produced “Outside Edge”, an exhibition charting a history of Black lesbian and gay culture in the UK, which is at the Museum in Docklands until 4 April 2008.<sup>4</sup>

---

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

---

<sup>4</sup> For further information on the rukus! Black LGBT Archive and “Outside Edge”, see: [www.rukus.co.uk](http://www.rukus.co.uk).

## ***The Sure Start journey***

The National Evaluation of Sure Start<sup>5</sup> has shown the importance of reaching out to all families, and this important, practical guide<sup>6</sup> demonstrates some of the key ways of doing this.

It cites evidence to support outreach as a way of working, and, drawing on research findings, outlines:

- Promoting good outcomes for children
- Reaching excluded and disadvantaged groups, outreach and home visiting, including:
  - Families from BME groups
  - Disabled children and those with Special Educational Needs.
- Supporting parents, including engaging with fathers.
- Joined-up working and partnerships
- Health, etc.

For each, it shows what has been learned from research, identifies some potential barriers to take-up of services, and then gives some examples of good practice.

This is useful as a check on how outreach is being developed, and also has evidence that can be used to help argue a case for this way of working.

## **Equality Impact Assessments**

IDeA has just published a practical, online learning resource<sup>7</sup> which offers clear guidance on conducting equality impact assessments.

It includes a brief guide to what Equality Impact Assessments are; definitions of key terms; a six-step guide to the Assessment process; and a range of helpful tips.

---

## **Tackling social exclusion – Other Agencies**

### ***Challenging prejudice ...***

---

<sup>5</sup> See: <http://www.ness.bbk.ac.uk/>.

<sup>6</sup> *The Sure Start journey: a summary of evidence*. DCSF, 2008. Available to download as a pdf (364 kb) from: [http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/Sure\\_start\\_journey.pdf](http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/Sure_start_journey.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> See: <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=8017247>.

This is a new report<sup>8</sup> from the “LGBT Hearts and Minds Agenda Group”, a group of reps from different LGBT organisations, who met to shape a policy document for Scotland.

The report identifies key areas where discrimination takes place, and then sets out a series of recommendations around:

- Workplaces and public services (including sharing best practice and better support for LGBT staff)
- Religion and belief
- Education and family
- Media and leadership
- Citizenship and social capital (including developing links with the National Capacity Building Programme)
- Cross-cutting recommendations (including commissioning research; establishing equality as a cornerstone of a successful society; and taking the work forward in a strategic way).

---

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

### ***Professional development workbook***

MLA have just published this self-assessment workbook<sup>9</sup> for people in MLAs working with children and young people.

“Every Child Matters: Change for Children”<sup>10</sup> is the new cross-government approach to the wellbeing of children and young people from birth to age 19. An integral part of this is the Common Core Framework of Skills and Knowledge for the Children’s Workforce, which reflects a set of common values and defines the basic skills and knowledge needed by those working with children, young people and families.

The Common Core identifies six areas of expertise which everyone working with children and young people should have in common. They are:

1. Effective communication and engagement
2. Child and young person development
3. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child

---

<sup>8</sup> *Challenging prejudice: changing attitudes towards lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in Scotland – recommendations of the LGBT Hearts and Minds Agenda Group*. The Scottish Government, 2008. Available to download as a pdf (315.82 kb) from: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/212871/0056591.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> *Self assessment framework: working with children and young people – professional development workbook*. MLA, 2008 (ISBN-13: 978-1-905867-26-4). Available to download as a pdf (1400 kb) or Word (1170 kb) document from: <http://www.mla.gov.uk/website/programmes/education/edintro>.

<sup>10</sup> See: <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/>.

4. Supporting transitions
5. Multi-agency working
6. Sharing information.

This Framework “interprets the six areas of expertise from the Every Child Matters Common Core Framework and provides a workforce development toolkit to assist in their implementation. The Framework can be used by staff and volunteers in all museums, libraries and archives.” [p4]

---

## **Broader issues – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government**

### **Sustainable Communities Act**

The Sustainable Communities Act received Royal Assent on 23 October 2007.

A brief guide<sup>11</sup> has just been published, which describes the Act and what will happen next.

“The Sustainable Communities Act aims to promote the sustainability of local communities. It begins from the principle that local people know best what needs to be done to promote the sustainability of their area, but that sometimes they need central government to act to enable them to do so. It provides a channel for local people to ask central government to take such action. It is also a new way for local authorities to ask central government to take action which they believe would better enable them to improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of their area. This could include a proposal to transfer the functions of one public body to another.

The scope of the Act is very broad, covering economic, social and environmental issues. It does not limit the type of action that could be put forward, provided the action is within that broad scope. It is for local people to decide what they think needs to be done to promote the sustainability of their area.” [p3]

### **The Customer Service Excellence Standard**

As you may have seen, the new CSE Standard was launched on 10 March.

“The aim of CSE is to encourage, enable and reward organisations that are delivering services based on a genuine understanding of the needs and preferences of their customers and communities.”<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> *Sustainable Communities Act 2007: a guide*. DCLG, 2008. Available to download as a pdf (157 kb) from:  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/681480>.

Of particular interest to us are the five key areas which the Standard focuses on – these are a very clear indication of the Government’s current priorities:

- “Personalisation: services must be designed around the needs of the public. Hard-to-reach groups must not be ignored;
- Collaboration: Work must be done in partnership with citizens;
- Workforce skills: emphasising the link between public service reform and training for staff;
- Leadership and commitment: organisations must display customer-focus from the Chief Executive down to frontline staff;
- Accountability: to communities and individuals.”

The CSE has its own website<sup>13</sup> which includes information on the background to the Standard; a very useful “information hub”<sup>14</sup> (which includes, for example, definitions of key terms, such as benchmarking, and brief arguments as to why they are important); and a self-assessment toolkit.

### ***A passion for excellence: an improvement strategy for culture and sport***

The LGA have just published this new strategy<sup>15</sup> which aims to support local authorities as ‘leaders of place’, starting from the premise that:

“Culture and sport are the glue that holds communities together. Local teams, theatres, festivals and galleries are all sources of interest, entertainment, income, and above all, local pride.” [p4]

The strategy aims to show that, by “making the most of sporting and cultural opportunities, local authorities can improve the quality of services to their local communities” [p4], and weaves together three developments:

- The increasing recognition of the value of culture and sport in the wider economy
- The greater emphasis on expertise and good judgement when looking to improve standards and raise performance
- The third development strand “is the advice to push money and responsibility down and out to the lowest possible levels, to be open-minded about who is best placed to deliver services, to trust partners in

---

<sup>12</sup> See:

[http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/newsroom/news\\_releases/2008/080310\\_new\\_standard.aspx](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/newsroom/news_releases/2008/080310_new_standard.aspx).

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.cse.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/SAT/homeCSE.do?>.

<sup>14</sup> See:

<http://www.cse.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/SAT/getDynamicContentAreaHome.do?type=1>.

<sup>15</sup> *A passion for excellence: an improvement strategy for culture and sport*. LGA, 2008. Available to download as a pdf (1.3 mb) from:

<http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/CBDCC1D5-8984-41A1-AFD8-C6ECD15C21BF/0/apassionforexcellence.pdf>.

the private and voluntary sectors, and to trust people in the community to know what cultural and sporting services they want and need.” [p4]

By ‘culture and sport’, the strategy is referring to:

- The performing and visual arts, craft, and fashion
- The creative industries
- Museums, artefacts, archives and design
- Libraries, literature, writing and publishing
- The built heritage, architecture, landscape and archaeology
- Sports events, facilities and development
- Parks, open spaces, wildlife habitats, water environment and countryside recreation
- Children's play, playgrounds and play activities
- Tourism and visitor attractions
- Festivals and attractions
- Informal leisure pursuits.

The strategy begins by setting this work in the national context of the National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy<sup>16</sup> (which sets out how central and local government will provide the support that local partnerships will need to deliver excellent Local Area Agreements) and also notes the three challenges that the culture and sports sectors currently face:

- “while the value of culture and sport is recognised as important in people’s lives and the last Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) saw overall scores improve, the sector has the lowest proportion of councils achieving the top two categories of any service assessment
- the new economic role of councils is one where culture and sport can have a powerful impact on local renewal, however councils are required to find a further 3% efficiency savings
- the new performance framework raises new challenges around participation, while customer expectations are rising and competition for people’s time has never been higher.” [p7]

The second section of the strategy looks at how the culture and sports sectors will address their own improvement. The document says that, from other work on local government improvement, it is clear that:

“Improvement is most successful when three interdependent processes take place: monitoring, challenge, and support underpinned by leadership.” [p10]

It sets out what it means by these processes by listing examples of tools:

Monitoring tools:

---

<sup>16</sup> *National improvement and efficiency strategy*. DCLG, 2008. Available to download as a pdf (300 kb) from: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/649026>.



- National indicator set
- Voluntary business improvement benchmarks
- National impact library
- Regional commentaries

Challenging tools:

- Self assessment
- Peer led challenge
- Validation
- Peer review
- Facility accreditation

Supporting tools:

- Regional improvement networks
- Knowledge and learning
- Workforce development
- Leadership development. [taken from p11]

The strategy intends to provide the key components which are intended to improve:

- Data and evidence of impact on outcomes
- Performance and address underperformance
- Regional support structures
- Sharing of knowledge and learning
- Leadership and workforce development.

The document then goes on to look at each of these in turn.

### **Improving data and evidence of impact on outcomes**

The strategy reiterates that the government will be using the set of 198 national performance indicators which relate to 11 outcomes:

- Stronger communities
- Safer communities
- Children and young people (be healthy)
- Children and young people (stay safe)
- Children and young people (enjoy and achieve)
- Children and young people (make a positive contribution)
- Children and young people (economic wellbeing)
- Adult health and wellbeing
- Tackling exclusion and promoting equality
- Local economy
- Environmental stability.

It then focuses on those indicators that relate specifically to sport and culture, and those to which culture and sport can contribute (these are

set out in an appendix to the document); and shows how these will become incorporated into the LAAs and LSPs.

It outlines some of the recent work in the culture and sports sectors in developing evidence of outcomes, and also lists web-links to other sources (such as work by Sport England, IDeA, and some of the Beacon work).

### **Improve performance and address underperformance**

This includes a number of ideas for improvement, including:

- Self-assessment (and it notes that the new *Culture and sport improvement toolkit* will be available shortly on the IDeA website)
- Peer-led challenge
- Validation – “The process involves an IDeA consultant and an IDeA accredited peer independently validating the self-assessment.” [p18]
- Peer review
- Peer support – although “... the lack of capacity in the sector is limiting the availability of peers.” [p19]
- Improving facility and service standards by using, eg Museum Accreditation; Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme

Finally, this section looks very briefly at sources of support to address underperformance. It suggests that these can come from a number of sources:

- Through the various processes of challenge and support offered by IDeA including peer led challenge, validation, peer review and or ongoing tailored support
- Through the Culture and Sport Improvement Networks involving member councils, regional Non-Departmental Public Bodies and professional bodies
- From the Regional Improvement and Efficiency partnerships.

### **Improving and simplifying regional support for improvement**

This section begins by noting the role of the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships, and that there is a growing number of regional or sub-regional networks which aim to improve communication and share good practice.

It also notes the value of the Regional Commentaries (which were produced for most single-tier authorities in 2007) – but which were also resource-intensive to produce – and suggests pursuing the idea of Culture and Sport Strategic Reviews. These could produce the following outputs:

- Confirmation of progress on the agreed actions from the first round of Regional Commentaries
- A summary identifying the key conclusions and actions which will form the basis of future work with the Local Strategic Partnership and inform the regional cultural improvement plan and CAA risk assessment requirements, subject to the final nature of the CAA
- A summary of best practice and improvement to be shared with the regional improvement network for action and response. [taken from p22]

### **Improving knowledge-sharing and learning**

“Over the next 12 months it is intended to migrate Cultural Connections into a single cultural and sport site on IDeA Knowledge with links to the regional Cultural Observatories. Together the network will provide councils with a range of national and regional advice and guidance, and examples of good practice. IDeA will also support Communities of Practice where they are appropriate and sustainable. Communities of Practice provide a virtual opportunity for individuals in different councils and organisations to communicate and learn from each other. IDeA will also provide support to develop better mutual learning for both members and managers.

Regional Improvement Networks will also provide opportunities for shared learning supported by Non-Departmental Public Bodies and professional bodies.” [p23]

### **Improving leadership and workforce development**

This section lists a number of current development programmes and notes the importance of continuing to build on these.

The third section of the document looks at “Delivering the strategy – roles and responsibilities”. It wants:

“those responsible for culture and sport [to] ensure that the sector:

- contributes to achieving agreed outcomes
- meets locally agreed improvement targets
- achieves continuous self improvement.” [p28]

To ensure this happens, the strategy recaps the roles of, for example, the National Culture Forum, DCMS, Non-Departmental Public Bodies, the LGA, IDeA, and the Audit Commission.

It also emphasises that, with the shift in responsibility away from central government, local government and partners will need to take a far stronger lead.

“However experience has shown that limited capacity within local government and organisations such as CLOA and the other

professional bodies limits the ability to maintain a significant involvement on a continuous basis. The new arrangements will need to be realistic about capacity available, given demands now being placed on individuals at the regional and local levels as well as the demand for more national leadership. It will be necessary to provide resources to help build capacity where this is required.” [pp31-32]

To assist with this, the strategy recommends the establishing of a National Culture and Sport Improvement Network.

To ensure that the strategy is actually delivered, DCMS and other stakeholders will be preparing an ‘integrated action plan’.

The document also has a handy ‘to do’ list:

“Ten things you and your council can do to deliver the strategy and improve culture and sport services:

1. show how culture and sport can contribute to delivering your sustainable community strategy by examining the evidence from other places and making the case in your council
2. show how culture and sport can help deliver your LAA improvement targets
3. if increasing participation in culture and sport would help you improve outcomes for your communities include one of the participation indicators as an improvement target in your LAA
4. invite representatives from the culture and sport sector onto your Local Strategic Partnerships and its thematic partnerships
5. commit to using the new culture and sport improvement toolkit to self-assess your organisation and use it to define your improvement priorities
6. consider using one of the external challenge processes to help you improve
7. get involved in the development and delivery of culture and sport strategic reviews
8. help support the development of your culture and sport regional improvement network
9. identify what you are good at and share it with others. Take the opportunity to learn from your colleagues
10. offer to become a peer or support your professional body in making their contribution to delivering the strategy.” [p33]

Finally, the document looks at measuring the success of the strategy:

“The overall effectiveness of the strategy will ultimately be judged nationally against the sector’s achievements in increasing and sustaining participation in culture and sport as measured by the National Indicators. Locally it will be judged in terms of achieving better outcomes for local people and communities as measured by the LAA improvement targets where these exist.

However along the way the success of the strategy can also be measured and judged by the take-up of a range of voluntary activities including:

- the number of Local Strategic Partnerships which recognise culture and sport in their Sustainable Community Strategies and LAAs and the achievement of improvement targets where these are set
- the number of councils and other organisations using self-assessment and external challenge
- the level of participation in and effectiveness of regional improvement networks
- the growth in access to knowledge and shared learning as measured by use of IDeA Knowledge and Regional Observatories
- the increased availability of a national library of evidence demonstrating the impact of the sector
- the number of services and facilities achieving, maintaining and improving in recognised accreditation schemes
- the extent, effectiveness and impact of joint working and collaboration by Non-Departmental Public Bodies and other agencies on improvement work. “ [p35]

This new strategy aims to ensure that the contributions made by culture and sports are fully recognised (and rewarded). It is critical that there is real ownership by local authorities, and that sport and culture are ‘knitted’ into the LAA (and the results of this become apparent when the CAAs commence in 2009).

However, and it may just be the presentation, the reporting and other relationships between national, regional and local bodies looks immensely complex, and could potentially result in new layers of bureaucracy – we’ll all need to ensure that this process is streamlined and effective.

This is an extremely important document – a ‘must-read’.

### ***Delivering Local Area Agreements: the contribution of cultural activity***

Following on from the above, this new guide<sup>17</sup>, produced by MLA London and Arts Council England, London, and its companion publication (the *Digest of research*) have been produced “to show how culture can contribute to specific indicators within LAAs and to provide supporting evidence.” [p3].

---

<sup>17</sup> *Delivering Local Area Agreements: the contribution of cultural activity*. MLA London/Arts Council England, London, 2008. Available to download as a pdf (1.68 mb) from: [http://www.mlalondon.org.uk/uploads/documents/Delivering\\_local\\_area\\_agreements\\_final.pdf](http://www.mlalondon.org.uk/uploads/documents/Delivering_local_area_agreements_final.pdf).

The guide “is not intended to provide solutions but to draw together key information and stimulate thinking on how cultural activity can deliver crosscutting themes within LAAs.” [p3] It provides an overview (with brief case studies) of the contribution that cultural activities can make to the Single Set of National Indicators, grouped under the key outcomes:

- Stronger and safer communities
- Children and young people
- Adult health and wellbeing
- Local economy.

The *Digest*<sup>18</sup> draws together research evidence (case studies, evaluation reports, etc) to show some of the impacts that cultural activities can have, and also maps these against the National Indicators. It includes as one example Welcome To Your Library.

---

## Abbreviations and acronyms

BME = Black and minority ethnic  
CILIP = Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals  
DCLG = Department for Communities and Local Government  
DCMS = Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
DCSF = Department for Children, Schools and Families  
DIUS = Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills  
IDeA = Improvement and Development Agency  
LAA = Local Area Agreement  
LGA = Local Government Association  
LGBT = lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered  
LSP = Local Strategic Partnership  
MLA = Museums, Libraries and Archives Council  
MLAs = museums, libraries and archives  
NYR = National Year of Reading

---

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:

John Vincent  
Wisteria Cottage  
Nadderwater  
Exeter EX4 2JQ

Tel/fax: 0845 128 4897  
E-mail: [john@nadder.org.uk](mailto:john@nadder.org.uk)

March 2008

---

<sup>18</sup> *Delivering Local Area Agreements: a digest of research to evidence the contribution of culture to Local Area Agreements*. MLA London/Arts Council England, London, 2008. Available to download as a pdf (530.25 kb) from: <http://www.audience.co.uk/Downloads/Delivering%20Local%20Area%20Agreements%20Research%20Digest.pdf>.