

# Thinking About Inclusion

Taking personal and corporate responsibility for welcoming everyone



Christine Burke and Simon Goldsmith



# Welcome

**This little book is to help you make your services open and welcoming to everyone. It doesn't matter whether your services are public, private or voluntary, nor whether people pay at the point of use or not.**

We have included some exercises and activities. These are to help you and your staff think about things that could exclude people who might use the services you provide (building based and non-building based).

The term 'customer' is used throughout this booklet to denote people who use or purchase your services. This is in order to describe everybody, including disabled people and people with learning disabilities or hidden impairments. Our intention is to help you consider how you can make sure that everyone is included and supported to use or take part in your services.

The term 'inclusion' is also used throughout the booklet. It means everyone in the community is welcome. Also that there are no barriers (whether physical, emotional or attitudinal) and that they know they are welcome.

Also included is a toolkit to help you assess

your practice and develop an action plan that will make your organisation accessible to all and expand your customer base.

We hope you find this useful and that this booklet can complement your own evaluation processes. We would welcome your feedback or indeed the chance to talk more about the ideas and action.

This booklet was written as an outcome of our work in developing inclusive practice which can be found in 'The Accomplished Community'. See our website to download this guide:

[www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/publications](http://www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/publications)





If the answer to this question is yes, this booklet is for you.

If the answer to any of these questions is 'no' or 'I don't know', you may find this booklet useful.

**Do you pride yourself on customer satisfaction?**

Yes

No

☐☐

**How do you know what your customers think of your services?**

Yes

No

1. Do people come back?
2. Do people come back more than once?
3. Do they have a choice?
4. Do they recommend you to others?
5. What do they say about you?
6. What proportion of your staff class themselves as disabled?
7. What might prevent disabled people to work for your organisation?
8. Are disabled people hired as volunteers?
9. Is there a career progression for volunteers?
10. How do you know if you are including everyone?

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## Who is missing from your services?

Wheelchair users  
People with learning disabilities  
Non-English speakers  
People with autism  
Visually impaired  
Hearing impaired  
Older people  
People with dementia  
People with hidden impairments  
People with mental health issues

Yes No


## Who else do you think is missing?

Are they: missing altogether? coming less frequently than others? less satisfied?



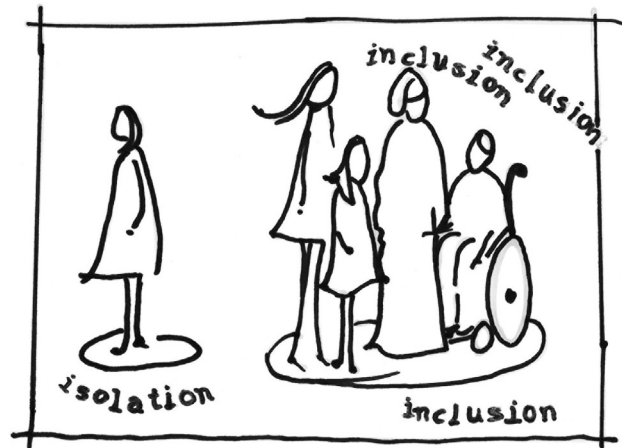
# A bit about inclusion

**It's easy to say you want to welcome more people and expand your customer base. But making it happen can feel hard.**

We are not always aware of people's diverse needs. Sometimes we make mistakes, or are afraid of getting it wrong. Sometimes we are a bit afraid of people who seem 'different'. This may tempt us to create separate provision for people like 'them'.

But history has taught us that this creates isolation and sometimes abuse.

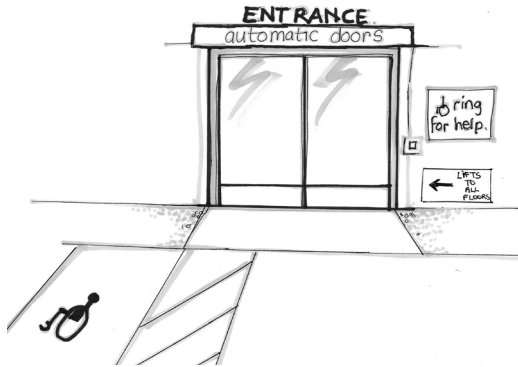
It can also give the wrong message to the wider community that some people cannot be included.



# The right to be valued

**We are born in a world that values people differently. This affects how others treat us, and also how we feel about ourselves.**

We are not born with such judgements about the value of people. We learn this from our families, television, news and social media, books, friends and peers.



When people are asked to make a judgement in terms of how the world values them, we find responses are consistent about who matters and who does not. Celebrities are often at the top of the list and disabled people are often at

the bottom.

This is one of the challenges of inclusion. It is important to understand how we learn our attitudes towards people and how this affects how we treat them. If we believe that people cannot learn and have no capacity to grow or enjoy the same things as others, we may deliver services that separate 'them' from the rest of 'us'.

Specialist services have often segregated people and they have taught communities about how they respond. We have much to learn from turning the tables and listening closely to colleagues in mainstream services who work with the public every day,

The more we understand this, the more we appreciate that we all want similar things in life. It is our differences that make the world an exciting place to be.

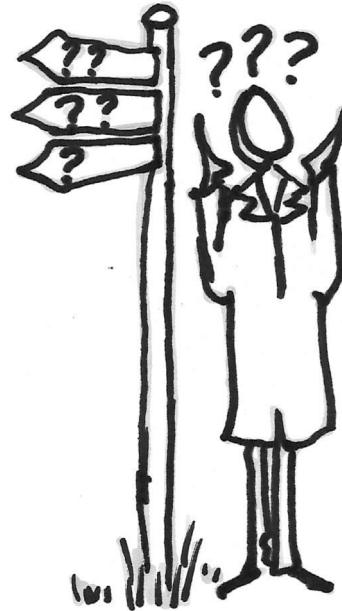


# On the following pages are some things you can do with your staff to:

- get them to think about who may be excluded and why
- develop an action plan to make your organisation open to all.

The sets of questions have been suggested to promote discussion that will help with your action plan. You'll also find a self-assessment toolkit that can be used to help with your action planning.

The exercises are intended to help your staff to think about how they support customers and how they are made to feel welcome. You can use this information as an online exercise for your staff to answer and think about on their own, or you can bring them together to discuss the questions. We find it helps if staff can find time to work together, as it enhances their creative thinking and team work.



# Exercise one: on being valued

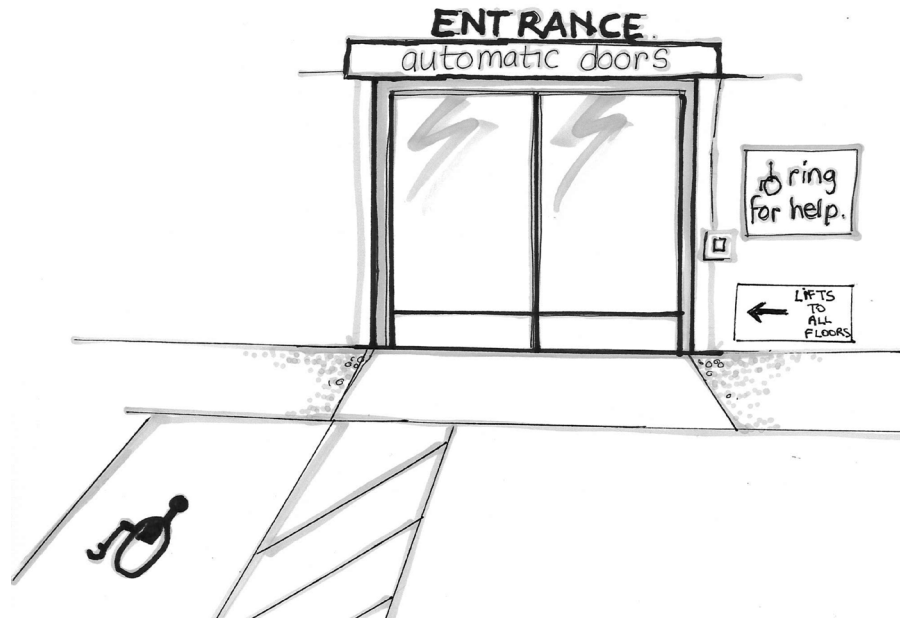
**Use these questions to help staff to think about all aspects of your services, from marketing to delivery and customer care. It will help with developing ideas about how to reach your potential customers and ensure they feel welcome.**

- How do we show all our customers that they are valued?
- How can we show these things to all customers and potential customers?
- If we treat people the same, is that the same as treating them of equal value?
- Do we value people for their achievements and abilities, or for their qualities and humanity?
- How have we learned to judge the worth of another?
- How do we make sure everyone is valued and supported to access every part of our activity?
- Make an assessment as to how easy your service is to use?
- What is happening outside that make things difficult?
- What is happening inside that makes it difficult?

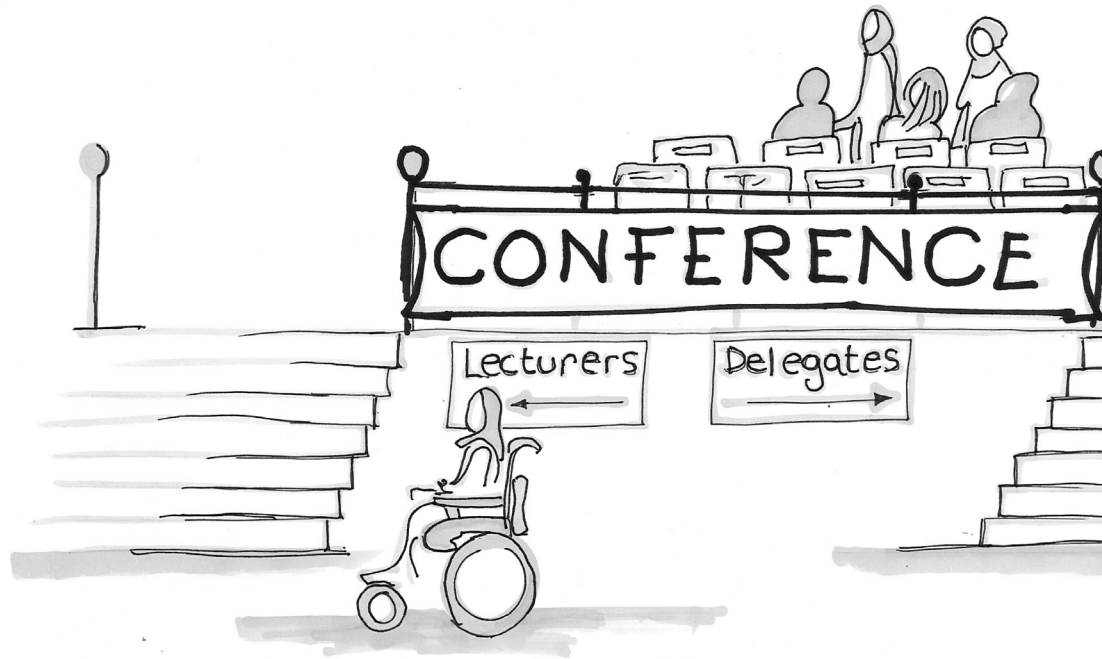
# Exercise two: every picture tells a story

Use the pictures that follow as a discussion point with your staff. Ask them to look at the pictures and say what they feel about the message they relay. Use the following points to guide your conversation.

- Are there physical barriers to people using your services? Ask people to identify physical barriers in their own department and write a list.
- How do we communicate information in ways that are accessible to everyone, particularly to people who have difficulty reading?
- How could we support everyone to use the same service offer? What could be the benefits? (For example, friendships, learning, opportunities for everyone to contribute, etc.) If you are offering a separate service for one section of the community, ask why? And discuss what stops that section of the community participating alongside others.

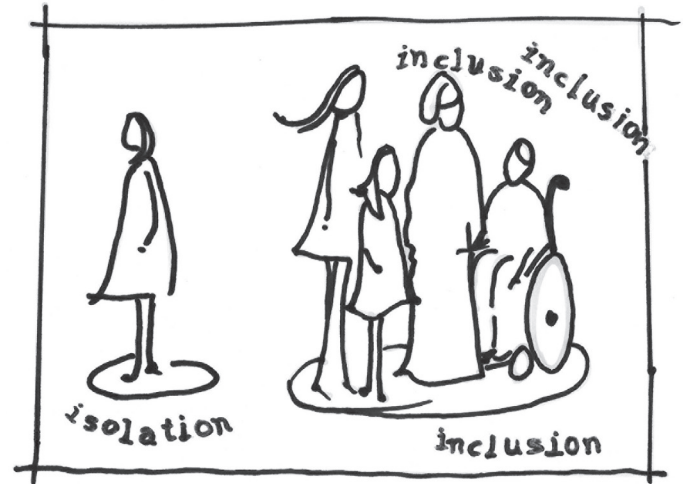






CHILDRENS CLASSES	
children's Drop in 10am - 12pm 10000	SWIMMING Beginners 10am - 11am Advanced 11am - 12pm 10000
OPEN H. MOTHER SWIMMING EVERY MON 10am - 11am	DANCE 6:00 MON, TUE, THU Ballet - 7:00 Tue, Wed - 1:00
*DISABLED ADULTS ON SUNDAYS 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM 10000	<b>DISABLED ADULTS SATURDAYS ONLY SWIMMING 10:00</b>

ADULT CLASSES	
SWIMMING MON 10am TUE 10am WED 10am THUR 10am SUN 10am	BEGINNERS YOGA ADVANCED YOGA
PROGNA 10000	TENNIS Racket Ball Basketball
*MARTIAL ARTS 10000	*EXERCISE 10000



# Exercise three: more about being valued

**The aim of this exercise is for staff to consider the steps and actions that help people to feel welcome and that they belong.**

Ask people to discuss:

- What makes you feel welcome?
- How do you welcome people in your house?
- How do you make people feel welcome in your place of work?





# Self-assessment template

This self-assessment is only intended as a guide to help you check your understanding of what needs to happen to make your buildings and practice accessible to all.

We have created a work template of this assessment toolkit for you to use to assess your organisation/ service. To download, see the websites below:

[www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/publications](http://www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/publications)  
[www.valuesinc.co.uk](http://www.valuesinc.co.uk)

## Getting the basics in place

Do you have clear and shared values and principles across your organisation to support your work with all possible customers in the community?

Do you have a 3/5 year strategy for this work?

Are you able to state your recent achievements and current priorities for action in this area of work?

Are you clear who is involved and who is leading this work?

Yes/No	If no, by when?	Who is responsible?

## Getting the basics in place

	Yes/No	If no, by when?	Who is responsible?
Do you have a system for agreeing specific outcomes related to a broad range of access issues and monitoring progress?			
Do you have a breakdown (with numbers) of different communities in your area?			

## Having an effective plan in place for meeting specific needs

	Yes/No	If no, by when?	Who is responsible?
Do you have an action plan with clear priorities and outcomes, and arrangements in place to make it happen and for monitoring and review?			
Does the plan clearly identify responsibilities for action?			
Does the plan include the different needs of different local communities?			

## Having an effective plan in place for meeting specific needs

	Yes/No	If no, by when?	Who is responsible?
Does the plan show how it will be funded?			
Does the plan include an effective training programme that includes disability awareness?			

## Promoting equality

	Yes/No	If no, by when?	Who is responsible?
Have you decided what should be done to eliminate discrimination?			
Do you ensure that all sections of the community have fair access to your services?			
Have you decided how your staff will show all customers that they are valued?			
Do you have a broad range of positive images in display that represents the diversity of their local community?			
Have you decided how to attract missing customers?			

## Promoting equality

	Yes/No	If no, by when?	Who is responsible?
Have you decided how you are going to make sure that staff are treating everyone according to their needs? (Equal does not mean the same).			
Have you decided how to make sure that everyone is valued and supported to access every part of your organisation?			
Have you decided how you will ensure disabled people are to be supported to participate in all activities?			
Have you decided how your staff are going to make sure you are able to include everyone in activities?			
Have you decided how you will create an ethos of inclusion throughout the organisation and avoid the pitfall of segregation?			
Have you decided what should be done to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?			

## Questions relating to your building

Adapted from a questionnaire used by Shoppers Anonymous, West Sussex

### Outside the building

	Yes/ No	If no, by when?	Who is responsible?
Is it easy to get to your service by public transport?			
Is there a clear sign to your building/service?			
Is the entrance clearly marked and accessible to all?			
When you ask local people about your organisation, do most know where it is?			
Does the building look nice from outside?			
Overall, does the service/building look welcoming?			
Could you see the opening/closing times?			
Are the opening time signs easy to read?			
Is the area outside safe?			
Is it easy to open the door?			
Is there a bell to ring if someone needs help?			
Is the bell low enough for everyone to reach?			

## Questions relating to your building

### Outside the building

Is there car parking nearby?

Is the parking charge reasonable?

Does the car park have 'blue badge' spaces?

Is it easy to access dropped pavements?

Yes/ No	If no, by when?	Who is responsible?

### Inside the building

Is the floor clear immediately inside?

Is there a low-level counter for people using a wheelchair?

Is the temperature comfortable?

Is there a customer toilet available?

Are there clear signs for the toilets?

Is there an accessible toilet?

Is it clear where you need to go to ask for the accessible toilet key?

Yes/ No	If no, by when?	Who is responsible?

## Questions relating to your building

### Inside the building

Is the approach to the accessible toilet clear?

Is the accessible toilet clear of obstructions inside and outside?

Are there comfortable chairs to sit on?

Is there easy read information available?

Are all areas accessible to wheelchair/pushchair users?

Is there a lift available to upper floors?

Are signs big enough to read?

Is it easy to find your way around the building and to different activities?

Is there a notice board for information?

Is the notice board accessible and easy to use by all customers?

Do images on notice boards represent all customers?

Yes/ No	If no, by when?	Who is responsible?



## Customer service

	Yes/ No	If no, by when?	Who is responsible?
Are staff members available to help?			
Are staff welcoming when you approach them?			
Are staff members easily identified?			
Do staff smile?			
Do staff greet customers politely?			
Do staff use eye contact?			
Are the staff friendly and helpful?			
Are staff prepared to offer help if needed?			
Do staff members take time and consider customers' needs when they ask for help or assistance?			
Are staff members able to answer customers' questions? Or know whom to ask?			
Do staff members have access to communication aids if a customer needs one?			
Do staff have name badges with large print on colour contrast?			

# Developing an action plan

## Drawing on the results of the exercises you have chosen to use:

- Ask your staff to list all the things that they feel are barriers to including everyone
- Ask them to look at all the barriers and suggest solutions to each barrier
- Use the information to inform your action plan.

# Practical things you can do now

- Install at least one low reception desk
- Ensure communication is offered in different formats including person to person
- Move mops, buckets and stored goods out of accessible toilets (for disabled people)
- Know where the key to the accessible toilet is
- Use plain English with simple pictures to help make your point or instruction clear
- Smile
- Don't cover your mouth when you talk, so that people can lip read
- Listen to your customers and ask what would help them to be included
- Ensure your website makes it clear that everyone is welcome
- Treat people with learning disabilities as adults and find out what would help them to use all your services
- Review your room layouts to ensure clear passageways and aisles
- Publicise how easy and accessible you are

# Building Inclusive Kent Communities

## Our Community Partners

### Tonbridge and Malling



Libraries & Archives



### Tunbridge Wells



Libraries & Archives



### Swale



# Values Inc.

An independent community based organisation that works on project management and delivery of work that pushes new boundaries in the area of social service transformation and whole community responses to overcoming the barriers faced by disabled people. Values Incorporated has developed, in partnership with The Avenues Group, 'Community Futures Kent', a community organisation run by, and with a learning disability to open up mainstream services to all.

[www.valuesinc.co.uk](http://www.valuesinc.co.uk)

## Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities

We work to break down the economic and social barriers and prejudice that people with learning disabilities face throughout their lives.

We promote the rights, quality of life and opportunities of people with learning disabilities and their families. We do this by working with people with learning disabilities, their families and those who support them to:

- Do research and develop projects that promote social inclusion and citizenship
- Support local communities and services to include people with learning disabilities
- Make practical improvements in services for people with learning disabilities
- Spread knowledge and information.

[www.learningdisabiities.org.uk](http://www.learningdisabiities.org.uk)

# RISKS

To laugh is to risk being a fool  
To weep is to risk being sentimental  
To reach out for another is to risk involvement  
To show feelings is to risk showing yourself

To place your ideas, your dreams  
Before a crowd is to risk their loss  
To love is to risk dying  
To hope is to risk despair  
To try is to risk failure

But risks must be taken because the greatest  
Hazard to life is to risk nothing  
Those who risk nothing do nothing, have  
nothing  
And are nothing



They may avoid suffering and sorrow  
But they cannot learn, feel change, grow, love,  
live

Chained by their certainties, they are slaves  
They have forfeited their freedom  
Only a person who risks.... Is truly free.

Anon (Author unknown)

## **Values Incorporated**

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[www.valuesinc.co.uk](http://www.valuesinc.co.uk)

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Email:  
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Website:  
[www.learningdisability.org.uk](http://www.learningdisability.org.uk)

Registered charity number  
England 801130  
Scotland SC039714

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changing  
lives