

Standards in Community Connecting

The *Inclusion Web* outlined in the last chapter offers people with mental health issues a simple way of recording the meaningful people and places in their life. Gathered together, individual *Inclusion Webs* provide evidence of whether a service makes an overall significant difference in people's community inclusion.

In this chapter, the authors write about another means of gathering evidence of organisations' effectiveness: *Standards in Community Connecting*.

The *Standards* were written to support those organisations that are conscientious in their attempts to help people connect. How do those organisations know whether their activities are productive? The *Standards* offer a means of answering that question.

The *Standards* also provide commissioners of services with a framework that breaks down the potential benefits of conscious community-building work. They also offer regulators and inspectors a structure with which to gauge good practice.

Introduction

Over the last 10 years or so, growing numbers of organisations that support disabled people have begun to turn their attention to communities. Strategies around Independent Living and ‘inclusion’ have been around for much longer, of course¹, but practice seems to take some years to catch up with theory and rhetoric.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that even those organisations that have strong, person-centred approaches – for example, people have their own homes, imaginative support plans and choose their supporters – often struggle in their efforts to foster community connections.

We were not aware of a clear framework that would help such organisations know whether they were doing well in supporting people to build relationships in their community. This chapter details the development and early use of the *Standards in Community Connecting* that we devised in response to this perceived need.

Samples of the *Standards* are included in this chapter. To see the *Standards* in full, go to: www.in-control.org.uk and search for ‘Standards’.

The problem

It is now quite commonplace that people who need extra support live in ordinary communities. However, many of them remain isolated even though they live in an ordinary house in an ordinary street.

There are many agencies that say that they support people to be included. Organisations say they are engaged in community connecting, community building, inclusion work and integration.

For some years, we have been working to help people connect in their communities. We are clear that the purpose of this work is to support people to develop real friendships, find love, have a strong sense of belonging and make a contribution.

We began to wonder whether everyone working in the field of community connecting would define their ultimate aim in the same way. We also wondered whether people who wanted support to be part of their community would recognise our definition. Some agencies seemed satisfied to limit their connections activities to someone going bowling with a staff member. Others seemed to work hard to support people in developing real friendships in their communities.

We hoped that the *Standards* would enable providers to bring a sharper focus to their community-building work so that they could assess their current achievement and set future goals.

We carried out some informal research with commissioners and regulators. We found that, on the whole, commissioners and regulators don't ask agencies to support people with community connecting. Many voluntary organisations undertake this work because they know it is what those who use their service want; and because it seems so obviously right and principled, not because funders ask them to do it.

At a time when resources are becoming more and more stretched, providing support that isn't required by commissioners might seem extravagant. Self-Directed Support and the Government's personalisation programme now offer the chance for people to use their support money to spend in ways that put them at the centre of community life. Self-Directed Support enables people to choose what they pay for, but there are many people who don't yet benefit from it. Full implementation will take some years. Services for those people are still chosen for them by commissioners.

We thought that part of the reason commissioners and regulators don't demand community connecting work was because the people in these roles were unclear about the possible outcomes.

In summary, lack of clarity about the ultimate purpose of community connecting and about strategies that could be used, was confusing for individuals, support staff and those commissioning support for individuals.

We devised the *Standards in Community Connecting* to enable all these groups to be able to recognise signs of success: what would be happening if supporters were effective in facilitating community connections?

What we tried

We sketched a picture of what life would be like for someone who is really connected in his or her community. Then we broke this picture down into different elements so that the contribution of support activity in helping someone connect could be measured.

The *Standards* were designed with a number of groups in mind:

- › people who use support: the *Standards* provide a way for individuals and their friends and families to make a judgement on how well they are supported to connect with their community

- › staff in support organisations: the *Standards* offer a way that staff can measure their own performance, identify areas in which they are strong; and areas in which they are weaker
- › commissioners and regulators: we hoped that the *Standards* would enable commissioners to understand better the potential benefits of conscious community-building work. We hoped, too, that regulators might have an interest in defining good practice in the area.

Building on other Standards work

We began thinking about the *Standards* in 2006. Jo Kennedy had some involvement in two related pieces of work. The first was *Patterns of Connection, action research for inclusive communities*, a proposal which was developed by Pete Ritchie for SHS Trust. This work did not find funding and wasn't carried out.

The research proposal highlighted the issue of exclusion and detailed a method that would 'help agencies to make a credible judgement about their contribution to supporting people in community life, and where there is scope for improvement.' The proposal's criteria for making that judgement formed the basis of the *Standards in Community Connecting*.

At the same time, Jo worked with the Scottish Community Development Centre on the *National Standards for Community Engagement*. These were developed by community members and organisations as a way of defining good practice in involving communities.² We were impressed by the participative way in which these were developed – 500 individuals and organisations were involved – and by how useful they were in providing a tool for evaluation that could be used by communities, agencies and regulators.

However, we were not aware of any standards that were in use and defined the outcomes of community connecting work with people who need support. On the other hand, we knew that some agencies were more successful in supporting people to achieve these outcomes than others because of the particular ways in which they worked. Chapters in this book describing the work of KeyRing and Grapevine provide two of the best examples.

The Standards developed in two sets. The first set defined what we thought people themselves were looking for as the outcomes of community connecting work. The second defined ways of working which agencies could adopt to be successful in community connecting. It is important to emphasise that the first set is not intended as a test of an individual's personal qualities or competence in being a community member.³ This set is designed to help an individual assess whether they are being well supported to build a life in community.

Our first draft was informed by the *National Standards for Community*

Engagement, the *Patterns of Connection* proposal (both described above) and by the views and ideas of people we worked with in conference workshops and training sessions. We shared early versions with people who have expertise in this area: John O'Brien, Simon Duffy and John McKnight. We listened to their feedback and a second draft was produced.

We tested them with a wide range of informed participants from service providers and community organisations at a 2007 conference: *From Lucknow to Newcastle*⁴. The *Standards* were revised in line with feedback.

The Standards

There are two parts to the *Standards*:

1. What we seek for the people we support.
2. What supporters can do.

1. What we seek for the people we support

There are eight *Standards* that represent what services should seek to achieve for people they support.

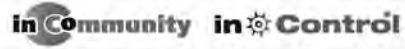
As a result of how we support them, the person can say:

1. I have people who love me and whom I love.
2. I have friends and I have chosen them.
3. I contribute to my local community.
4. I know people in my neighbourhood.
5. I know people who share my interests.
6. I am a citizen.
7. I feel valued and included.
8. I can follow my religious and cultural beliefs in my community.

For each of these eight *Standards* there are detailed indicators. For each indicator, people are asked to record their areas of success, areas to work on and ideas for improvement.

Below is a sample page from this first part of the *Standards*. It is not possible to include all the indicators here because they would take up too much space. However, they are available free at www.in-control.org.uk (search for 'Standards').

What we seek for the people we support



Standard	Indicators	Areas of success	Areas to work on	Ideas for Improvement
2 I have friends and I have chosen them	There are people in the intimacy circle in the relationship map (who do not use services)			
	I go out regularly at times that suit me with people I have chosen as friends (and who aren't paid to be with me)			
	I regularly spend time on my own with friends			
	I have people to share my feelings with - whether happy or sad			
	I communicate with my friends regularly (phone, email, letters, cards etc)			
	I invite friends to my house when I want to for meals, parties etc			
	I have some friends the same age as me			
	I have friends who do not use the same services as me			
	I get invited to see my friends			
	I receive and send cards and presents at birthdays and festivals			

2. What supporters do

There are eight process *Standards* that can be used by services to promote successful community living for the individuals they support.

The eight process Standards:

1. The task of connecting people is central to the service's purpose.
2. Staff at all levels of the service have a theoretical understanding of community connecting which informs their practice and they have opportunities to develop their learning.
3. The service has an in-depth knowledge of the community in which it operates and is well respected in that community.
4. The service makes a contribution to its local community.
5. People are valued for the gifts and capacities they have.
6. The service is designed to promote community connecting.
7. Staff have skills and qualities which enable them to connect people in communities.
8. Managers have skills and qualities which enable them to support staff to connect people in community.

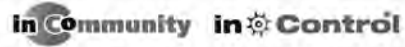
As with the *Standards* in part one, there are detailed indicators for each Standard. Again, the person using the *Standards* is asked to record their areas of success, areas to work on and ideas for improvement. On the next page is a sample page from the second section of the Standards.

What we learned

Standards smack of bureaucracy and these *Standards* are not immune to that association. A number of people have objected that standards could reduce community connecting to a tick-box exercise.

John McKnight – someone who inspires the work of several authors in this book – advised us of the danger of ‘*curricularising*’ an orientation to community. McKnight is deeply sceptical of the ability of human service organisations to enable people to contribute to – and connect with – community.⁵ Indeed, he argues persuasively that human services systematically rob communities of their natural ability to care for their members.

What supporters do



Processes for the Service	Indicators	Areas of success	Areas to build on	Ideas for Improvement
2 Staff at all levels of the service have a theoretical understanding of community connecting which informs their practice and they have opportunities to develop their learning	Staff can articulate their understanding of the importance of connections, the reasons why people get disconnected and the challenges involved in sustaining connections			
	Training and development opportunities on connecting people are available to all staff			
	Stories about connecting people are gathered and form the basis of learning within the service			

Processes for the Service	Indicators	Areas of success	Areas to build on	Ideas for Improvement
3 The service has an in-depth knowledge of the community in which it operates and is well-respected in that community	Local community members know about the service and speak well of it			
	Staff have undertaken in-depth mapping of the community and are familiar both with key places and key people in the community			
	Staff support individuals to use local community resources			

McKnight suggests that human services have a vested interest in a deficit view of the world. Human services are part of a service economy that constantly tries to turn human situations into areas of special need that can only be dealt with by professionals.

McKnight argues that those interested in helping excluded people to connect should invest their time and effort in communities themselves so that they include everyone:

‘Services that are heavily focused on deficiency tend to be pathways out of community and into the exclusion of serviced life. We need a rigorous examination of public investments so that we can distinguish between services that lead people out of community and into dependency and those activities that support people in community life.’

It would be unwise to dismiss McKnight’s warning and we need to be clear about why we persisted in writing the *Standards*. The reality for many people who use support in the UK is that they rely on their support provider to help them get established in communities. Increasing numbers of support providers are realising that rhetoric about inclusion can only become reality if they are active in helping people to connect in their community. Many embark without a map on the long and painstaking task of helping people to connect – without a clear picture of the route they will take or the destination they are heading for. How are such organisations to know whether they are doing things that will be helpful? How will they know when they have arrived – if not at a final destination, then at least at important milestones along the road?

The more sophisticated support providers are in their understanding of communities, the better the chance that the people they support will make connections. This understanding should include the awareness that the support provider itself is often not best placed to connect people; and that its task might rather be to locate the community connectors in the neighbourhood. Community connectors – people who are well known, trusted and who have strong networks in the community – are best placed to help excluded individuals get connected. It is usually these well-known community people, rather than service staff, who can organise a community welcome for labelled and excluded people.

Some service organisations have a very strong orientation to community. They consciously recruit people who have experience of community organising rather than those with a background of specialised professional activity. They use community-building techniques such as mapping all the formal and informal associations in a neighbourhood. They match the potential contributions of

individuals they support with the places in community where those contributions may be welcome.

These organisations have a foot in both the service and community worlds. KeyRing and Grapevine (see Chapters 3 and 10 in this book) are such organisations. Both organisations struggle to persuade their funders of the legitimacy of their community connections activities. We hope that the *Standards* offer support to such agencies in demonstrating the productive outcomes of their activities to commissioners and regulators – outcomes that clearly align with the aspirations stated in many Government policy papers⁶.

In summary, our aspirations for these *Standards* are that:

- › individuals use them to ask for more from services
- › agencies use them to evaluate and improve their practice
- › commissioners use them as a basis for funding this work
- › regulators use them to help define quality in this area of work.

Using the Standards – experiences in the north west

In the north west, a local authority trained staff in their learning disability services to support people to be part of their local communities. This was so successful that they extended the approach to other services – older people, mental health and even transport. They created a leadership team for this work and trained and supported staff to use community-connecting approaches. The *Standards* were used to help the leadership group to describe their starting point. They were then able to make decisions about how to proceed and later measure their progress.

Below, Michelle Livesley describes how the *Standards* were used in this programme of work.

The Local Authority made a bid to its Learning Disability Partnership Board to fund a community connecting initiative in their learning disability services. The bid included funding for a Participation Co-ordinator post to enable staff to support people to develop friendships and relationships. They commissioned me to provide training and ongoing mentoring for the Co-ordinator. The work initially focused on day services. I met with senior managers, the newly appointed Participation Coordinator and a member of the Partnership Board to design the programme, to clarify expectations and to visualise desired outcomes. It was agreed that eight ‘*champions*’ would be selected (two from each of the four day centres) and, along with the Coordinator, they would be further trained to use practical tools for

community connecting. They would also be supported to co-design and facilitate a community-connecting awareness day for all day centre staff.

I delivered training for day centre support workers who had been selected to champion a community-connecting approach in the services where they worked alongside a number of family members and some senior managers.

After this course, the champions and the Coordinator were trained and supported to introduce practical community-connecting tools in their workplace, encourage and support staff to use the tools and gather stories to share. I introduced a number of exercises, including analysing what is meant by the term ‘community’, doing a baseline check on the current situation by exploring what was working and wasn’t (from a number of perspectives) and examining what it takes to become intentional bridge builders. We also used tools that helped us to focus on the practicalities of making connections. These included the history map, presence to contribution; matching staff; capacity mapping; community mapping; clarifying roles and responsibilities using the *doughnut*; managing risks and reviewing progress; and learning to use the *4+1 questions*.⁷

It was evident that choosing the ‘right’ people to be involved was crucial. ‘Natural’ connectors were identified among staff. These became local champions. They quickly started to thrive because they found themselves involved in work for which they had a natural talent. Their positive approach and can-do attitude were infectious and captured the imaginations of the greater part of the day centre staff.

The Coordinator and champions designed and delivered a series of awareness days for all day centre staff and managers. This session has also been adapted for families, other professionals and the Partnership Board. Many of the practical tools for community connecting used during the initial course have now been adopted within the day centres.

The Local Authority also invested in person-centred thinking training and now uses the person-centred thinking and community-connecting tools in sessions for people who use services and their support staff. At the end of these sessions, the individual and their support worker leave with a community-connecting portfolio. This includes a one-page profile and plan of action. Staff are intentionally matched to people using services based on skills, interests and personality characteristics

There are many examples of people being better connected in their community. (See the highlighted stories below). Some people have started voluntary and part-time work.

Senior managers, the Coordinator and champions would say that the course and activities that followed have changed the culture of the organisation.

The Coordinator said ‘*Community connecting is no longer seen as an add-on to people’s roles. It is becoming a core responsibility. It is not only included in supervision*

sessions, team meetings and shared across various sectors, it is also incorporated into the core business of day service provision. It is now the essence of what we do. It has made community presence and participation a reality for people. We are working towards our ultimate goal of enabling individuals to contribute to their communities as equal citizens. As a result, natural friendships and relationships are emerging.'

Fundamental to success was the support lent to the work by senior management. The champions and Coordinator were given time to develop their work and ongoing opportunities to meet and reflect on what they were learning. Even now, two years on, the group meets on a regular basis.

The success of this programme created a buzz that has spread beyond learning disability day services. Senior managers decided to repeat the approach to include staff working in supported living, mental health, short breaks, elderly services and transport.

By this time, the *Standards in Community Connecting* had been developed and I decided to use these with the new group. I wanted to use them for two reasons. Firstly, I wanted to help the group have a good understanding of current reality in each of the services. Having a full picture of what was happening both for individuals and for the service would help us to identify priorities for change. Secondly, I wanted the group to be able to track its progress. The first phase of this work in learning disability services had been able to demonstrate progress through stories. In this phase we wanted to be able to report change in a structured way. Stories are important, both for demonstrating what is possible and for building enthusiasm. Putting stories alongside a more formal way of measuring progress could be even more powerful.

The new nine-month programme began with a day for stakeholders and members of a leadership team composed of people from different areas of the services (senior managers, the commissioner of the project and newly selected champions who were employees of the Local Authority and had been matched to the role of community connector prior to the start of the course). I asked members of the group to measure their respective services against the *Standards*. After filling in 'Areas of success' and 'Areas to work on' for each Standard, the group described how success would look from the perspectives of people using services, staff, the organisation and the local community. They then agreed their roles and responsibilities in relation to the community connecting project and agreed an action plan.

About two thirds of the way through the programme, the champions used the first part of the *Standards, Outcomes for people*, to take stock of their individual and collective activity. By now, there was evidence of community mapping, better matching of staff to individuals' interests and personality preferences, examples of

people making a valued contribution to community based on their gifts skills and interests and increased opportunities to make connections.

Using the *Standards* not only highlighted where progress had been made but also showed where some practices, policies and procedures seemed to be getting in the way. For example, one of the indicators for Standard 6 in Part Two (*What supporters do*) states ‘*Staff are encouraged to use their own networks to help connect people*’. However, staff and people in their networks were told that they needed to become volunteers and be CRB-checked⁸ in order to take part in these community-building activities.

This information was fed back to the leadership team (which was made up of senior managers, the Participation Coordinator and the training manager) in the form of questions such as:

- › How will the community connecting champions be supported to continue to develop this work beyond the training programme?
- › What is the Local Authority’s position on staff using their own personal networks?
- › Will community connecting become part of the Local Authority’s mandatory training calendar?
- › How can we engage those managers who have not been on the training?
- › Do our policies and procedures effectively support people to take appropriate risks?

In the meantime, the leadership team took responsibility for addressing issues and the areas of weakness that had been highlighted by the *Standards*.

We decided to revisit the *Standards* on the last day of the programme to review overall progress. On the final day, the champions and leadership team came together to share the successes from the work and to identify things that were blocking progress.

We saw many examples of level one changes, those changes that can be made without altering core structures, policies and procedures. The champions had used the community connecting tools to gather information, which helped them to discover what the people using their services wanted to do with their time.

Jackie and Alan

Jackie had worked in a residential home for elderly people, some of whom had been suffering from dementia for several years. She was initially cynical about the project, saying that poor staffing levels, policy and procedure would get in the way. After completing the two-day community-connecting course, she felt she had a better understanding of what was involved but was still unconvinced about the likelihood of having any success where she worked. *'After all,' she said, 'no one attending the centre has taken part in an activity out of the centre for three years'.*

When Jackie came to the next session, she was bursting with excitement. She had been working with Agnes who didn't seem to want to join in with the group activities at the centre. Instead, Agnes spent most of her time tidying and clearing things away. This constant activity irritated some of the other older people. It was obvious to Jackie that Agnes was good at and enjoyed tidying and cleaning. Jackie also discovered that Agnes loved children but no longer had any opportunities to spend time with them. Jackie had children herself and helped out at their school. She asked if Agnes would be able to help out too and was over the moon when the school said yes. Agnes began to help out once a week, preparing fruit for the children.

Alan had been living at a unit for people who were experiencing mental health difficulties.

Lisa discovered that he used to attend church with his parents before they passed away and that he loved playing the piano. She asked her team to look for opportunities for Alan to combine both of his interests. One of her team members, June, was a member of a local church and offered to introduce him to her congregation both at Sunday Mass and at the weekly coffee morning. After a few weeks, June asked the minister if Alan could help out in any way. Alan now plays the church organ every Sunday.

When we compared what had been recorded on the *Standards* at the outset of the programme with what had changed by its completion, there was clear evidence of positive change around outcomes for people. Standard 5, *'I know people with common interests'*, was initially recorded as *'not working'* by all the services involved in the project except mental health services, who recorded that *'some'* people go along to clubs or meetings with others who share the same interest. On the final day, participants reported that most were now recording this information in relationship circles and that, wherever possible, the matching tool was being used to match staff to people using services.

When I introduced the *Standards* to the group, it was evident that knowledge of policy and procedure was inconsistent. The group therefore struggled to complete the second part, *Processes: what supporters do*, because they simply did not know. This was important information. Using the *Standards* uncovered that some staff

were working within guidelines and boundaries that did not actually exist! Using the *Standards* helped to reveal what the actual policies were and what was merely myth.

Some members of the leadership team were unfamiliar with the concept of community connecting and openly stated that the services that they worked in had never considered the questions that were generated by the *Standards* and their indicators. Consequently, they struggled to complete the *Standards* at the outset and felt overwhelmed by the challenges they saw on the road ahead. Discovering this early in the process helped us to address these concerns and prevent a possible derailment later.

Establishing a leadership team that would take responsibility for change at a managerial level sent a powerful message that the Local Authority recognised the importance of the work. The message was well received by the champions, who felt that their efforts were acknowledged. The leadership group was clear about how best to support the champions within individual service areas. There was a lack of clarity, however, about decision-making in relation to policy and procedure. No one seemed to know who was responsible for policy or who could authorise changes. This was a stumbling block to making significant changes in relation to the second part of the *Standards*. Although there had been much positive change for people using services and their staff teams, progress in Part Two of the *Standards* had been limited. This demonstrated to the leadership team that it needed to identify and involve the people who had responsibility for decision making at this level.

Without change in formal organisational processes, there remains a risk that community-connecting activities are hindered and diluted by unhelpful policies; or that they may thrive for a time and then be forgotten or sidelined because the staff involved move on or other priorities take over.

The first part of the programme resulted in inspiring stories of change for individuals. When the *Standards in Community Connecting* were introduced in the second part of the programme, stories were supplemented by factual information about where progress was happening.

This enabled staff to celebrate the collective achievements of community connecting. It was possible to see the benefits of the entire approach. It was then more difficult to dismiss individual stories as untypical, isolated successes. Although uncomfortable at first, this ultimately helped to create a shared sense of direction for the community connecting work.

Suggestions for others

Try them yourselves

The best way to approach the *Standards* is by using them yourself and with your colleagues. You can use the two sections separately. Use the first part – *What we seek for the people we support* – with groups of staff that support people directly, or in supervision or team meetings. Use the second section – *Processes: what supporters do* – with senior managers.

Think about ways that you measure progress

Organisations, commissioners and regulators all have ways of measuring outcomes on the ground. What does your organisation measure or look at in relation to community connecting? What do your local commissioners and regulators look for? You could get people together to ask: ‘*What do we want to measure around community connecting?*’ You could examine the *Standards* and the *Inclusion Web* as part of these discussions.

Involve the right people

The *Standards* are most effective when their use involves those who hold the information needed to make a baseline assessment of the strengths and weaknesses in what the service is doing about community connecting. The same is true of those who have the authority to make decisions based on ideas for improvement that arise in using the *Standards*.

Don't worry about where you are now

The *Standards* act as a mirror for organisations, reflecting back a picture of their current health in relation to community connecting.

For some organisations, being confronted with a realistic picture of how well they are doing may feel very challenging. A natural response may be to avoid the exercise and carry on as before. One organisation thought the *Standards* would show them to be so far behind where they wanted to be that the outcomes they desired would feel out of reach.

However, for others, the *Standards* create an effect of optimistic discontent that galvanises the organisation into action and allows progress to be measured.

No organisation should be complacent about its achievements. Every organisation can improve its understanding of community connections and play a more and more productive role. All organisations are on a journey. The important thing is, of course, to take the first step. Without that first step, there are

few possibilities for positive change. Take the first step and everything becomes possible.

Jo Kennedy



Jo Kennedy is an independent consultant working in Scotland. Her first real job was with Scottish Human Services (SHS), an organisation set up to promote the inclusion and empowerment of people who use services. SHS pioneered the use of person-centred planning approaches in Scotland. Jo then spent several years working for the Scottish Community Development Centre where she focused on inclusion from the point of view of communities and the professionals working in them.

She became particularly concerned about why so little community development activity was targeted at disabled people or people with mental health issues. Recently, she has been supporting Local Area Coordinators in Scotland by facilitating action learning sets. Jo is co-author of *People, Plans and Possibilities* (2000) and *Friendship and Community* (2002). She lives in Edinburgh with her husband and three children.

Michelle Livesley



Michelle Livesley works with Helen Sanderson Associates as a trainer and consultant. She leads within her team on community building, positive productive meetings and person-centred supervision and risk. Michelle also works within a supported living provider organisation called IAS (Imagine, Act, Succeed) Services as Head of Operations.

She is passionate about organisational change, community building and being a member of a local darts and dominoes team. Michelle lives in the north west of England with her three children, partner and rabbit.

Carl Poll



Before starting KeyRing (see Chapter 3) in 1990, Carl had been a printer, typesetter, teacher and project worker (in a number of voluntary organisations). He was a founder of In Control and worked as a project consultant on the first pilots. He has written or edited many of In Control's publications, including the reports on the first two phases of In Control's work.

Over recent years Carl has helped to raise a national debate on the meaning of citizenship for marginalised people, for example organising seminal conferences with speakers such as John McKnight from Chicago and Varun Vidyarthi from Lucknow. He has spoken and written widely on how services can better connect with communities, and has championed a community approach within In Control. He lives in Lewisham, south London with his wife and two sons.

Helen Sanderson



Helen's work has focused on using and developing person-centred approaches with individuals, organisations and communities. She leads the development and training organisation, HSA. She has written many books and materials on person-centred thinking, planning and community, including *Friendship and Community* with Jo Kennedy and Helen Wilson. Helen is a founder member of In Control, which met around her kitchen table for the first two years. She lives with Andy, their three girls and many hens.

Notes

1. For example, The King's Fund published *An Ordinary Life* in 1980. This publication argued that people with learning disabilities should have the same housing options and life opportunities as anyone else.
2. *National Standards for Community Engagement*: www.scdc.org.uk. The Standards cover: 1. Involvement; 2. Support; 3. Planning; 4. Methods; 5. Working together; 6. Sharing information; 7. Working with others; 8. Improvement; 9. Feedback; 10. Monitoring and evaluation.
3. John O'Brien, author of *The Five Accomplishments*, warned that the *Standards* ran the risk of being used in just this way. *The Five Accomplishments*, he said, had also suffered this misuse. *The Five Accomplishments* are: *Community Presence; Community Participation; Encouraging Valued Social Roles; Promoting Choice*.
4. *From Lucknow to Newcastle*, In Control, (2007).
5. See for example: *The Careless Society: Community and its Counterparts*, J. McKnight (1995).
6. See, for example, *Independence, Well-being and Choice*, Adult Social Care Green Paper, Department of Health (2005); *Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People*, Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (2005).
7. These tools are adapted from *Friendship and Community*, H. Sanderson, H. Wilson and J. Kennedy; and the *Community Connecting* mini book published by Helen Sanderson Associates.
8. A check on criminal convictions with the Criminal Records Bureau.