



INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

A research report

This Report was written by Cheryl Gowar, with the support of an Advisory Group who gave invaluable input:

Paul Bristow, formerly of Mental Health Foundation
Sam Callanan, Mencap
Neil Cleeveley, National Association for Voluntary and Community Action
Abigail Gallop, Local Government Association
Helen Kay, Local Government Association
Cam Nicholl, Digital Accessibility Centre
William Snagge, Essex Coalition of Disabled People
David Towell, Centre for Inclusive Futures
Graeme Whippy, Lloyds Banking Group
Gerry Zarb, Spectrum Centre for Independent Living

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www.disabilityrightsuk.org/policy-campaigns/reports-and-research/inclusive-communities

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Disabled people leading change

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1) Community

- a) Everyone understands 'community' differently. There is a general sense that community is 'a good thing' but there is no consistency in how community is understood, with inevitable consequences for how inclusion within the community is conceived.
- b) People have a multitude of attachments that can be organised around territory or some aspect of the person's identity. Local communities and 'communities of identity' are based on very different criteria and there is no inherent reason why they would overlap.
- c) The government's localism agenda could chime with the interests of local community groups but localism does not constitute automatic empowerment. Where responsibility for social reproduction has been shifted (via double devolution) to local communities there is a danger of reifying existing exclusions.
- d) 'Communities of identity', such as Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs), can be 'places of nurture' for individuals, where they can articulate their interests as well as develop broader public identities.
- e) Ideas about the merits of traditional communities belie historical patterns of inequality and do not serve as a good model for contemporary local communities marked by variety and difference.
- f) Social capital has become a popular motif for understanding the best way to organise vibrant communities, and communities with strong social capital have improved indicators for public health, educational attainment, public services etc. But the mechanisms and benefits of enhanced social capital are not equally accessible, especially for disabled people who experience physical and attitudinal barriers.
- g) There is a constant tension between asserting individual identities or interests and securing the benefits of community membership. Although fixing a specific identity for 'the disabled community' is problematic, it can be a strategic solution to the problem of disabled people's voices not being adequately heard in the local community.
- h) Communities do not have to be strong *or* diverse. A strong community is one that reflects its own diversity and communities operating without full inclusion risk detachment, dissent and consequent threat to democracy.

2) Inclusion

- a) Social exclusion has been routinely understood in terms of poverty and worklessness. The exclusion of disabled people is far more complex than this approach allows but the legacy of the debate has framed

dominant understandings of disability-based exclusion in economic-moral terms.

- b) Disabled people are excluded from society in terms of their access to resources, discrimination in the workplace and wider society, physical barriers to accessing the built environment, transportation and adapted housing, and the attitudinal barriers that limit participation in society across a range of activities.
 - c) Although disabled people will all experience exclusion very differently, there is a 'group dimension' whereby being part of a group marked as different from wider society leaves disabled individuals at greater risk of being excluded.
 - d) Citizenship is a universal phenomenon that provides certain social, economic and political rights for everyone, underpinned by civil citizenship which is based on the principle of justice via equality and equal protection of the law. There is a reciprocal logic to citizenship in that the rights it confers reproduces individuals equipped to participate in wider society.
 - e) Citizenship also contains a 'membership and belonging' component that establishes certain socio-cultural norms and standards for citizens. These expectations can exclude those – including some disabled people – who do not conform to these standardised ideas.
 - f) Some disabled people are excluded from full citizenship because 1) inadequate socio-economic resources and physical barriers to access prevent full participation in society, and 2) attitudinal barriers limit choice and control in the private sphere and expectations about what people can contribute.
 - g) The conventional, state-led idea of 'active citizenship' assumes that the state decides what contributions are valuable, but the efficacy of this approach is questionable. An alternative approach to active citizenship uses a bottom-up approach that allows citizens to re-define what is meant by contribution to society.
 - h) This alternative approach to active citizenship fits well with Sen's 'capabilities' model which asserts that well-being is measured by the opportunity to live the life you choose, rather than income. Disabled people can need support to ensure that they can live the life they choose and participate in society.
- 3) Inclusive communities
- a) An inclusive version of community development recognises the need for all individuals to be equally included in the community, as a precursor to effective articulation of community needs.
 - b) Some models of community development start from the premise that community members have different assets and talents, and thus refrain from prescribing participation according to standardised ideas about what comprises a contribution to society. Social quality, which

incorporates an element of self-realisation, may be a useful way for thinking about social capital and local capacity building.

- c) For disabled people, 'presence' in the form of physical access is not a marker of inclusion. Social inclusion in the form of recognition on equal terms establishes the conditions both for autonomy in relation to private decisions, and for public participation. Contact between disabled and non-disabled people is the key mechanism for furthering social inclusion.
- d) Communities bear some responsibility for facilitating inclusion, particularly in terms of attitudinal change towards disabled people, but not in a manner that removes control and decision-making powers from disabled people or normalises fixed social roles.
- e) Inclusive education can, to some extent, serve as a model for wider inclusive communities, showing how inclusive values, flexibility in relation to practices, social contact between disabled and non-disabled people as standard, and valuing a range of skills and talents can establish fully inclusive environments.
- f) Inclusive practices work better where they are operationalised across the scales in which they are embedded – for example, for inclusive education these scales would be the school, the local council, national policy, and a supranational mandate.
- g) Engagement, participation and decision-making reflect increasing levels of citizen participation and power. In general, more inclusive decision making processes (as measured in terms of increasing decision-making power) yield more inclusive outcomes for disabled people.
- h) Some forms of engagement that appear to reflect genuine involvement of disabled people can, in practice, manifest as tokenism because people have no real power if their interests can be dismissed.
- i) As well as being 'places of nurture' for individuals, DPOs are 'places of expertise' that can interject in public debate and inform government and public bodies through co-production and consultancy, effectively operating as a crucial conduit for disabled people's inclusion in their local communities.
- j) Concern for the efficacy of DPOs in this inclusionary capacity derives both from resourcing issues and from an increasing tendency to reduce engagement to commissioning and the role of DPOs to service users. It is the range of DPO functions that can help promote inclusion in the local communities in which they are embedded.

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INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES – A RESEARCH REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade or so, the concept of inclusion has become entrenched within the formalities of equalities legislation, regulations and guidance at multiple scales of governance. Particularly, the Public Sector Equality Duty's requirement for public authorities to understand the impact of their decisions on different people effectively demands engagement with people across the full range of protected characteristics (EHRC, 2011) and, more specifically in relation to disabled people, Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) frequently appeal to Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD) which asserts the right for disabled people to be included in the community. At the same time, although perhaps in a less formalised sense, local governments are operating under a directive of localism from central government that requires the inclusion of disabled people if empowerment strategies are going to be able to incorporate all of the community.

Legislative and regulatory changes have made daily experience more inclusive for disabled people in the workplace, the built environment and society more broadly, and yet there is still a long way to go before we can claim that we are fully included. It is in this context that the 'Inclusive Communities' project seeks to establish the ways in which local communities can be made more inclusive for disabled people. Following the legacy of disabled people's activism, which advocates that we can do things for ourselves rather than having things done for us, the aim was specifically to establish what disabled people can do to make communities more inclusive or, in other words, how communities can be rendered more inclusive through the leadership of disabled people. But no-one lives in a vacuum and, following the social model of disability, the project aims to understand disabled people's inclusion in society in two main ways. The first aim is to establish how disabled people and DPOs can bring about change by collaborating with public and private sector partners who have the power to make change happen. This specific question then falls within a second, broader emphasis on how to bring about attitudinal change towards disabled people across society.

Within the larger project, this report was intended to provide a desk-based evidence review to establish what academic research can tell us about 'what works' to create local communities that are more inclusive for disabled people. The original intention to draw from practical evidence within the literature was somewhat stymied by the relative paucity of explicit empirical examples focusing on exactly that subject. Instead the literature is dominated either by normative work that critiques existing exclusion or by work that focuses on inclusive education and inclusion of people with learning difficulties, both of which understand inclusion and community in specific ways that, in part, resist

direct extrapolation to the wider context of inclusion of disabled people in local communities. Moreover, as Azzopardi (2011) notes, academic work on inclusive communities comprises a vast and unwieldy literature that is poorly defined, making it difficult, logistically, to encapsulate within a finite report that has a specific target of understanding locally based inclusion work. In this context a slightly renewed focus involved returning to first principles, to attend to what is meant by the terms 'community' and 'inclusion' in order to establish how they intersect, and thus provide a framework for considering how inclusion in local communities happens generally, and how this might be applied to work detailing the experience of disabled people in particular. Returning to the original objective, the premise here is that understanding how local communities can be made more inclusive for disabled people is grounded in the recognition that communities must be made inclusive for everyone. Thus, although the empirical focus is narrowly targeted at disabled people, the contextual framework is broadly drawn.

Drawing attention to the relationship between disabled people as a group and wider society raises the issue of difference and similarity which will be returned to repeatedly throughout this report but needs to be considered explicitly at the outset for the purposes of clarifying terms. First, I refer to 'disabled people' in terms of a collective identity although, as will be well established, there are as many differences among disabled people as there are between disabled and non-disabled people and, further, not all disabled people endorse a positive collective identity. The intention here is not to attempt to deny the idea of diversity among disabled people who have very different experiences of impairment and disability and different sets of needs depending on these experiences, and who are further differentiated by other markers of identity such as race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion and so forth. However, collective political identities can be used to establish rights for disabled people as a whole, without asserting some collective cultural form. Every disabled person will have a different set of opinions about inclusion and an equally different set of needs for achieving inclusion, but disabled people as a group would benefit from the existence of a fully inclusive society and the recognition of full inclusion as a *right* for all. Second, considering difference and similarity among disabled people inevitably raises the question of difference and similarity in relation to wider society. Some of the themes discussed here will resonate broadly with those excluded on grounds other than disability. The principle of full inclusion in local communities is applicable to all, and future research may illuminate ways in which civic participation can benefit from collaboration across group difference. Here, though, the focus is specifically on examining the process of constructing inclusive communities in relation to the experience of disabled people.

This report presents the narrative generated by combining the thematic foci of community and inclusion to establish a theoretical framework, which then serves as the basis for understanding both empirical evidence of inclusive communities in the academic literature, and the best practice examples drawn from our own primary research that are presented in two subsequent sets of guidance. The structure of the report follows this logic, starting with an

examination of community and inclusion in turn, in each case starting with broad generalisations but, where relevant, working through to a specific discussion of the theme as it pertains to disabled people. The last main section starts with a normative approach, looking at how the idea of inclusive communities permeates models of community development and what this means for disabled people, before turning to draw some themes from empirical examples and to consider how these might inform our thinking on communities that are inclusive for disabled people. Finally, the report concludes by identifying ways of thinking about inclusive communities that are fed into the project's accompanying sets of guidance for Disabled People's Organisations and Local Authorities.

2. COMMUNITY AS CONTESTED CONCEPT

What is 'community'?

'Community' is a contested concept and there is a distinct lack of consistency in how it is defined and conceptualised (Barke & MacFarlane, 2001; Staeheli, 2008), and yet it is a ubiquitous term that peppers everyday communication. The European Community, 'pillar of the community', the D/deaf community, the local community, community development, the virtual community, community spirit, faith communities, gated community, LGBT community, sense of community, and community policing are just some of its myriad uses throughout political, academic and popular discourse (Barke & MacFarlane, 2001; Mah & Crow, 2011). While academic inquiry routinely incorporates an examination of the ways in which the term is deployed there is little evidence to suggest that its popular use is subject to such scrutiny (Staeheli, 2008), despite this varied usage. It is helpful, then, to start with a working definition of 'community' centred on its popular usage before unpicking some of the complexities built into these 'common sense' definitions.

A study conducted in the US by MacQueen *et al.* (2001) established an evidence-based definition of community as a starting point for rolling out participatory public health programmes into local communities. Precisely to generate the broadest possible 'buy-in' to the programmes within the community, the study was specifically designed to identify attitudes among different social groups. The resulting high-level, composite definition established community as "a group of people with diverse characteristics who are linked by social ties, share common perspectives, and engage in joint action in geographical locations" (MacQueen *et al.*, 2001: 1929). However the study also showed how there were differences between social groups in terms of their expectations concerning their role in the community, the extent to which their voices would be heard, and so forth. Thus, and pre-figuring some of the discussion below, even establishing a 'common sense' understanding of community begins to expose complex issues surrounding what the term might mean to different people, in different subject positions.

Academic definitions are substantively similar to the popular understanding. For example, Gregory's (2009: 103) definition of community as "A group of people who share common culture, values, and/or interests, based on social identity and/or territory, and who have some means of recognising and (inter)acting upon these commonalities" highlights the same elements found in MacQueen *et al.*'s (2001) popular definition: activity, identity and a spatial component. First, the idea of taking action is common to both definitions and, regardless of how far it is made explicit, conceptual debate and practical applications of community both routinely express normative ideas about the sorts of *activity* in which communities and their members should be engaged. However, temporarily leaving aside this common question of community activity for the section on how Inclusive Communities work in practice, the question 'what is community?' draws out a subtle distinction between the two definitions in terms of the ways in which they understand the intersection of the identity and spatiality components of community.

In Gregory's definition, the community-binding commonality can be "based on social identity *and/or* territory" (2009: 103, my emphasis) whereas for MacQueen *et al* social ties and common perspectives emerge among a diverse group "in geographical locations" (2001: 1929, my emphasis). In MacQueen *et al*'s definition, territory is reduced to the container where social processes unfold, whereas Gregory offers the possibility that territory can serve as the basis for community identification, despite differences in perspective based on gender, race, class, faith, political allegiance and so forth. Here, then, Gregory draws an analytical distinction between communities based on *identity* that centre on shared social characteristics such as those found in communities of faith or the D/deaf community, and communities based on *spatiality* which incorporate a territorial referent based on more or less formal boundaries which delimit, for example, a virtual, global network, the local community, or a gated community (Corcoran & Devlin, 2007; Valentine, 2001; see also Wenger, 2002).

This is not to suggest that the idea of a territorially defined community is absent from popular understandings. In fact, it is more reasonable to suggest that popular discourse echoes the UK policy environment standard where 'community' routinely refers to a neighbourhood (Cochrane, 2007). However, by de-emphasising territory, the popular definition reported by MacQueen *et al* relies on a common perspective emerging, despite social diversity, with no underlying impetus identified. As such this definition fails to recognise the possibility of place-based affiliation serving as the mechanism that underpins community, but also underestimates the practical work necessary to knit together local communities to produce a shared and inclusive community identity based on solidarity, despite different social characteristics and perspectives (Featherstone, 2012). Moreover, rather than just assuming commonality, foregrounding the question of how local communities come together to achieve common perspective draws the further question of who has been included or excluded in this realisation. Here we find the key focus for this project and a question for local governments more broadly.

In practice activity, identity and territory components of community intersect and overlap without difficulty and communities proceed without attention to these theoretical matters (Staeheli, 2008). A local DPO, for example, combines elements of a community of identity with a territorial referent, and engages in more or less communally determined actions. However, drawing analytical distinctions remains helpful for unpicking how these social mechanisms operate, in order that we can work towards understanding how inclusion and action might be inculcated in local communities. However this scrutiny raises caveats that need attention before we proceed to consider how academic contributions can help respond to these questions.

First, people exist within a multitude of communities, both territorial and non-territorial, with cultural influences that derive both locally and from far beyond the locality, and therefore each individual retains multiple identities and allegiances (Wilson and Peterson, 1992). As such, any emphasis on

singularity within a 'community of identity' masks its heterogeneity (Appadurai, 1996). This has been shown to be true within 'the disabled community' where progress has sat alongside division and disagreement just as much as it has in other social movements (see Barnes & Mercer, 2001, for example). Second, the spatial component of community is also more complex than a simple 'territory'. This report focuses on local communities, which can be defined in terms of the population, resources, services, businesses and so forth that come under the jurisdiction of the local authority, as defined by formal local government boundaries. However the social processes that construct these localities operate at multiple scales, from being embedded in the global economy and policies decided at the national level to sub-local, street-level action and affiliation. In return, the activity of a local community can have repercussions beyond its immediate environs (Herod, 2008). Moreover both the practice and the meaning of 'local community' change over time (Yeo & Yeo, 1988) adding a temporal dimension to spatiality. Rather than attempt premature closure, it is more useful to leave these tensions open and return to them throughout this review in order to understand their impact on establishing inclusive communities.

'Community' is, then, not the simple referent it might appear to be at first. Drawing out its different components has established the basis of its varied usage, as well as establishing the initial framework through which we might understand how to work towards more inclusive local communities. In this context, a long and varied history of academic investigation of 'community' can provide some insight into the contemporary condition of local communities. Some theorists have examined social relations as the mechanisms by which a place comes to be constructed as a community, with an off-shoot of this debate attending to the matter of what is to be done about communities 'in decline' or, indeed, whether 'decline' accurately represents actually existing conditions. Others consider how 'imagined communities', based on identification and allegiance, intersect with 'real communities' defined by territorial boundaries with concomitant sets of material practices. Still further questions are raised about the multiple scales and bases of community – as global, diasporic, rural, identity-based, and so forth – and the multiplicity of attachments that derive from these varying 'communities'. Finally, a particularly pertinent area of inquiry for this study is the extent to which communities include or exclude, divide or unify, and homogenise or accept difference (Valentine, 2001; and see Bertotti *et al*, 2011 and Crow & Mah, 2011 for full reviews of the dominant research themes concerning community across academic disciplines). The remainder of this section on community draws from within these debates to examine different aspects of the value of community and the possibility for inclusion.

Why community?

Debate persists in the academic literature over the extent to which a concept as nebulous and as prone to variable definition and oversimplification as community can be useful (see, for example, Barke & MacFarlane, 2001; Cater & Jones, 1989; England, 2011; Valentine, 2001). However, despite theoretical

ambivalence, community is a concept that “will just not lie down” (Day & Murdoch, 1993: 85), drawing attention from politicians, the media, and the general population. This popularity derives, in part, from the ideals of “belonging, co-operation, sharing and loyalty” which establish a “general consensus that ‘community’ is a good thing” (Barke & MacFarlane, 2001: 69), but community also resonates in very practical and functional ways (Barke & MacFarlane, 2001; Day & Murdoch, 1993; Staeheli, 2008). This intersection of community as an ideal and community as a practical solution features throughout its longstanding deployment. The post-war implementation of the welfare state reflected a clear assertion of the value of community with its premise of collective responsibility for the well-being of all, while moments of social upheaval from 1968 to recent concerns over apparently dysfunctional neighbourhoods have resulted in appeals to the idea of community to function as both the bridge between civil society and the state, and as the panacea for social ills (Ledwith, 2011). As it has stood the test of time, the apparent appeal of community has transcended political differences, precisely because of its conceptual flexibility. It can connote group solidarity, and collective action and responsibility that appeal to the political left, or self-reliance rather than state dependence that appeals to the political right (Barke and MacFarlane, 2001: 71).

Following a period of post war centralisation, in recent years the relationships between central and local government and civil society have rested on the principles of devolution to strong communities. Although the first New Labour government was recognised for its exertion of central authority, its agenda for local government reform included the principle of localism and by the early 2000s a ‘double devolution’ from central to local government and from local government to local communities was underway (Painter *et al*, 2011). The change in government in 2010 saw no shift away from this agenda as the Coalition government promised new powers at local level to institutionalise decentralisation and democratic engagement (Cabinet Office, 2010). While New Labour saw “the state as an enabling force, protecting effective communities and voluntary organisations and encouraging their growth to tackle new needs” (Blair, 1998: 4), the current government’s proposals for devolving state power to communities similarly aimed to “use the state to help stimulate social action, helping social enterprises to deliver public services and training new community organisers to help achieve our ambition of every adult citizen being a member of an active neighbourhood group” (Conservative Party, 2010: 37).

Although we need to guard against an assumption that localism necessarily manifests as community empowerment (Painter *et al*, 2011) the recent political agenda chimes with a tradition of community action and organisation which asserts that, with external support and resources, local communities are best placed to identify and define their own needs – in terms of service delivery, policy, and planning – and then influence how these needs can be met (Ledwith, 2011). In this context, effective communication between the local population and local government is essential to realise expression of local interests and make service delivery more effective and efficient (Barke &

MacFarlane, 2001; Haugh, 2011). In part this communication can result from strategies adopted by local authorities. MacQueen *et al* (2001), for example, stress the importance of the local state having a strong understanding of the community it serves for effective delivery of public health intervention and prevention programmes. Organisation within the community can also be an effective method for ensuring that needs of the members are articulated adequately. For some, the very principle of devolution alongside the affirmation of the capacity of local communities to respond to local needs, presumes that strong communities can be built based on “pro-active involvement of individuals in societal institutions and community organizations” (Haugh, 2011: 95).

Following the logic of this model, the extent to which the spatially delimited population operates as a cohesive community can determine the efficacy of local government’s service delivery for the population it serves. In other words, the interests of the state and civil society in developing strong, active communities can coincide in practical ways. However, it is important to avoid the conceptual slippage between the need for effective mechanisms for local organisation and particular, stylised ideas about cohesive, unified communities. Certainly research has shown that communities with strong social networks reap the reward of strong political institutions, improved economic development and more effective and responsive public services (see, for example, Boix and Posner, 1998; Wilson, 1997). But we also know that unequal communities are less equipped with the resources necessary for co-operative work (Boix and Posner, 1998). In other words, there is a danger that those most in need of support from the state will be least likely to participate in the arrangements necessary to access that support. Reserving the benefits of community organisation for the comparatively privileged fails the test of inclusiveness.

The academic literature offers a further concern relating to devolution. It is posited as a shift in the scale of the state–society relationship; moving decision making closer to citizens and thus enhancing democratic engagement. However perhaps a more significant feature of the contemporary form of devolution is the shift in the function of the state from provider to ‘enabler’ (Stott, 2011). Some theorists are concerned that the idea of this new role for the state manifests, in practice, as its withdrawal from concerns for the wellbeing of citizens and the shifting of responsibility for social and economic viability onto individuals and/or groups in civil society (Rose, 2000). Communities may be unwilling or unable to fulfill these roles adequately (Herbert, 2005) with significant consequences for those most in need, who are often also those least able to take on the extra responsibility of collective provisioning (Jessop, 2002). Rose (2000) argues that this technique of governing involves constructing political problems in such a way that the solution is inevitably shaped as the creation of obligation to others and self-management, and thus is an expression of state power rather than an expansion of democratic engagement. Moreover, inasmuch as devolution is accompanied by the imposition of particular moral values which excludes those who don’t conform, it is more than just the retreat from resource

provision that severs the actual experience of community from its ideal (Herbert, 2005) and that “rubs against the normative ideal of a public sphere than does not discriminate” (Staeheli, 2008: 13).

At the same time, however, Staeheli (2008) recognises that casting community as a ‘problem’, misses its potential as a site for individual and collective development, preferring instead to consider the local community as a site where membership, identity, participation and so forth can be negotiated. She suggests that community participation is where individuals can develop the knowledge, skills and voice to contribute to public debate as a citizen – claiming services, registering to vote, and understanding the importance of civic participation – and thus contribute to building community; support each other in communities of identity and encourage broader participation and educate the external population; and nurture political subjects and foster social capital. In other words, Staeheli (2008) advocates a grassroots re-working of the idea of community that can re-empower those groups that might struggle to be heard in the top-down version. Particularly of interest in this model is the way in which communities of identity or interest are seen as spaces of nurture that operate within local communities. Individual development within those communities of identity serves the members, the community of identity, and the wider local community. This shows how community participation can be an end in itself, rather than simply a mechanism for securing effective state provision. In a similar vein, the community ideal can also be popular among local populations and associated voluntary organisations as a matter of self-reliance. For example, Wood & Brown (2011) assert that self-reliance is especially a tradition in rural areas where small, remote communities thrive in their isolation through civic activism. Painter *et al* (2011) note that increasing citizen participation in local government practices is a far more prevalent form of empowerment than supporting independent community action, which perhaps points to a missed opportunity for supporting communities of identity as spaces for nurturing the otherwise marginalised.

What makes a strong community?

From the range of perspectives discussed here – central and local government, and citizens and civil society organisation – the idea of ‘strong’ community, not surprisingly, largely holds positive associations. However, the commitment to the concept of community in the abstract rests on varying understandings of what community looks like in practice. As Abbott & Sapsford (2005: 30) note, “People operate with normative guidelines about what a ‘good’ place is - good relationships with people who live there, good environment with a good quality of life and access to good resources and a feeling of ontological identity - a feeling of ‘fitting in’ with the others who live in the area”. And yet all these favoured qualities tend both to vary in form between individuals, and to butt up against the reality of actually existing communities. There is a danger of an idealised understanding of community impeding the development of strong communities in practice. Therefore, while we need to attend to the question of ‘how can we make communities

'strong'?', it must be asked within the context of different interpretations of what constitutes a strong community.

Barke and MacFarlane (2001: 82-3) describe an 'ideal type', traditional model of a local community as comprising homogeneous social composition possibly with an external threat to coalesce around which helps define, and distinguish between, 'us' and 'them'; considerable social interaction, numerous community organisations and considerable use of local facilities; and clearly defined spatial boundaries often delimiting a small area. As Barke and MacFarlane (2001) point out, however, the characteristics specified in these traditional understandings of community may not necessarily correlate directly with 'strong communities'. For example, closely-knit communities may have a high degree of external interaction rather than be insular, and linking idealised, traditional local communities with social homogeneity belies their reality by erasing profound class difference (Mitchell, 1996). Most importantly, while it has long been noted that homogenous social groupings produce strong communities, this regressive, exclusionary form fails as a model for contemporary local communities marked by heterogeneity and difference. Moreover, positing an unachievable homogeneity, or its best approximation, as the basis for strong local communities misses an understanding of the work that needs to be done to forge a strong, inclusive local community (Featherstone, 2012; Aiken, 2014).

In order to work towards strong communities in contemporary social organisation, we need a different model of community that avoids the automatic retreat to the idealised traditional version. For Selznick (1992, cited in Valentine, 2001: 111-2), a 'fully realised community' includes a shared history and culture; loyalty to a shared identity; reciprocity between members; the presence of intermediate associations and groups; autonomous development of individual members; member participation in various social roles; and integration in political, legal and cultural institutions. As with the traditional model, the elements of identity, activity and spatiality are clearly apparent, but Selznick's definition differs in two main ways. First, there is a sense that identity and culture can be forged as shared rather than being reliant on a fixed homogeneity; and second, there is an emphasis on co-operative activity as part of this process of community forging. Rather than accept normative assumptions about the sorts of activity that communities should be engaged in or suggestions about the preference for homogeneity, we can turn to academic debates to illuminate ways in which strong communities can emerge without resorting to the parochialism of traditional definitions. Two key academic debates follow on from Selznick's definition and can provide some insight here. They concern 'the decline of community' and negotiating difference within communities.

The 'decline of community' thesis

There is a long history of academics theorising the decline of neighbourhood, or local, communities (Valentine, 2001). As early as the period around the turn of the 19th Century, as industrialisation and urbanisation took firm hold in advanced states, theorists such as Tönnies and Wirth were concerned about

the social decay arising as the strong kinship networks of rural society were replaced by weaker relationships in large, densely populated, heterogeneous urban communities (Barke & MacFarlane, 2001; Valentine, 2001). In its contemporary form, the most well-known version of the 'decline of community' thesis is Robert Putnam's (2000) claim that everyday practices of participation in the community – such as participation in local organisations, voting and church attendance – are disappearing, leading to a decline in 'civic togetherness' which undermines community and social capital. The difference between Putnam's understanding and the traditional work, is that Putnam appears to follow an understanding of community similar to Selznick's version of the 'fully realised community' in that he focuses on activity establishing a community identity, rather than social homogeneity.

The concept of social capital is long-standing, but was particularly popularised by Putnam's work (1993, 1995, 2000), and has since become a focus in both academic and policy debates around community. Social capital refers to connections or social networks created between individuals within a community that result in the creation of social norms, trust and reciprocity. It can take the form of 'bonding' which builds connections within communities of identity, 'bridging' where connections are built across social difference for example within a local community, or 'linking' which forges connections across power differentials such as local community groups connecting with the local state. The popularity of the concept, particularly for local government, derives from research that has shown that it yields desirable social outcomes such as better physical and mental health or educational attainment, and more responsive and effective political institutions and public services (see, for example, Boix and Posner, 1998; Khan & Muir, 2006; Wilson, 1997). It is these desirable outcomes that Putnam contends have been lost as society has become more individualised.

However Putnam's work is not without its critics. It is notoriously difficult to measure community (Barke & MacFarlane, 2001) and, given the highly subjective nature of 'community spirit', "it is virtually impossible to generalize about whether there has or has not been a perceptible 'decline of community'" (Newby, 1985: 155). Moreover, even while some claimed that community was on the wane, a parallel history of alternative narratives exists that empirically refute the argument. For example, Gans (1962) famously found strong community links in the working-class 'urban village', while studies of much-maligned 'suburbia' have identified new levels of 'affiliation' and "rules of good neighbouring" (Crow & Mah, 2012: 22). Specifically contrary to Putnam's ideas about the condition of community in the current moment, Murray (2007) found that many social processes are still locally organised and communities based on collectivity can survive even without 'traditional' community bonds. Even at the apparent extreme, Komito (2007) found that virtual communities can enhance, although not replace, local community connections.

What this suggests is that new types of community interaction are not being captured in Putnam's thesis. Where some theorists identify social change as establishing new opportunities for community formation, those who tend to

associate community with its past forms necessarily identify social change as loss which, as Raymond Williams famously noted, can be used “a stick to beat the present” (1975, cited in Crow & Mah, 2012: 6). In the contemporary era, globalisation has enabled the formation of more cosmopolitan, extra-territorial identities and relationships (Szerszynski & Urry, 2002) alongside existing attachments to localities, but it has also transformed long-standing ideas about the nation-state as the locus of political involvement. As such, emerging subject positions, public spheres and forms of political practice (Purcell, 2003; Doehring, 2008) call for more flexible understandings of community that recognise the value of these new types of identities, bonds and activities.

This argument is not intended to undermine the very real issues that local governments have to deal with under a localism agenda in relation to fostering social capital as a strategy for community empowerment and development. However, understanding civic participation in very particular, traditional ways limits the possibilities of what a ‘good community’ might look like, and rejects alternative ‘bottom-up’ ideas that are, as Putnam (2000) himself argues, necessary for community members to buy into schemes to improve bonds and cohesion. This is particularly relevant given that, as already noted, certain communities have unequal access to social capital and it can be particularly difficult for disabled people to access the mechanisms of community-based civic participation. As such, relying on social capital in its potentially exclusionary format risks reifying existing social inequalities, rather than working towards inclusion. Beyond academic concerns over what actually existing communities might look like, this is particularly significant for practical decisions made by local governments, given that the state has a significant role in fostering social capital (Painter *et al*, 2011) and might therefore need to attend to new forms of community activity to ensure that its benefits are available to all. It is beyond the scope of this report to imagine new ways of developing social capital, but the problem of unequal access suggests that we need ways of understanding difference within communities.

Theorizing ‘difference’ within communities

This brings us to the second relevant key debate, which considers how ‘difference’ between community members is understood. Following the communitarian tradition which understands a strong form of civic participation as reward in itself, some advocate for a closely knit community, based on shared values, social obligation and the good of society, which establishes a moral order that maintains standards and can therefore restore civic virtue to communities ‘in decline’, thus reducing the need for state intervention. As such, communitarians expect the right of self-representation and responsibilities for determining local policy (Low, 1999; Valentine, 2001). While the idea of an organised, virtuous, and participatory society has its attractions, a liberal tradition counters that communitarians assume homogeneity and impose, rather than derive consensus. They advocate for a rights-based approach where citizens are equally able to assert their individual identities and preferences (see Oldfield, 1998; Pocock, 1998 and Shafir, 1998 for an explanation of the debate between the communitarian and

liberal traditions). Although both traditions would critique this representation as caricaturish, the philosophical debate between communitarians and liberals risk an impasse that seems to imply that communities can be *either* strong *or* diverse. This is an important myth to dispel, as exclusion and marginalisation is precisely a key feature that undermines strong communities.

It can be easy to assume that because people have something in common they have everything in common, and therefore to overlook heterogeneity within a community misses the different sets of interests at work (Crow & Mah, 2012). Any community is built from members who have multiple, shifting identities and loyalties that are only partially known by other community members, and who are unlikely to achieve exactly the same sense of belonging (Barke & MacFarlane, 2001). Exclusion is the inevitable consequence of failing to attend to these differences identities, and the consistent treatment of community as an exclusively positive phenomenon obscures the extent to which it can also carry these connotations of exclusion, inequality and social division (Crow & Maclean, 2006; England, 2011).

In practice, people experience a tension between their striving for distinction in the form of recognition of their individual identities, whilst simultaneously asserting their belonging in a community where interests do not entirely match their own (Doehring, 2008). However, rather than expecting everyone within a local community to have fully congruent interests, values and identities, Corcoran & Devlin (2007) discuss the ways in which individuals exist within multiple, overlapping 'communities of interest' which can cohere around place, identity or interests (and thus expands on the concept of 'community of identity' already discussed). One example of this is the way in which communities tend to bond and strengthen in the face of external threats which could, for example, be place-based (e.g. a locally unwanted development) or identity-based (e.g. women campaigning against domestic violence). Thus, similarity of interests can be the basis for establishing cohesive, effective communities, without cementing and imposing a single, place-based, overarching consensus (Young, 1990).

The impact of the distinction/belonging conundrum can differ depending on the constituency. Communities of interest can cohere around specific political identities to advance particular objectives, deploying a 'strategic essentialism' in which a group acts as if it holds a singular identity in order to achieve political goals, without making broader claims based on the projection on an authentic identity (Spivak, 1990). The achievements of the 'disabled community' in advancing the cause of disabled people provides an excellent example of the sorts of political gains that can be realised precisely by presenting this united front (Barnes & Mercer, 2001). Others argue that this strategy reifies specific identities, and insist instead on the fluidity and interdependence of social groupings that is a characteristic of intersectionality (Young, 2000). This argument is *also* valid for the 'disabled community' where some have argued that the imposition of a singular, homogenising identity marginalises certain disabled people within the actually-existing heterogeneous group, for instance at the intersection of race and disability, or

within a hierarchy of impairments (Barnes & Mercer, 2001). In practice, the decision is a matter of political commitment that is not easily resolved, as some activists are concerned that recognising difference and the multiplicity of identities amongst disabled people yields a fragmentation that tends towards political inaction (Barnes & Mercer, 2001).

The tag of 'difference' does not necessarily sit easily with some disabled people who, quite legitimately, dispute being marked as different from a standardised norm. Philosophical theorising on matters of identity, subjectivity and difference precisely revolves around decentring that standardised norm, and celebrating the excitement of difference as variety (see Young, 1990, 2000, for the classic rendition of this perspective). In practice, however, when confronted with hierarchies of power, 'disability as difference' often manifests as the agent of inequality and marginalisation, as an externally imposed tag rather than positive self-identification. This is, of course, precisely what an 'inclusive communities' project aims to challenge. A related, but somewhat distinct, issue reflects how some disabled people do not understand their 'difference' in a positive context. Much of the work around identity and subjectivity attends to questions of gender and race, where positive assertions of 'difference' are, perhaps, more likely to secure group identification. Although dissent and fracturing is common across social movements, the fundamental question of whether or whether not to assert difference in a positive context perhaps manifests in unique ways within the disability movement.

Rather than draw premature closure on any of these matters, we will return to both questions of 'difference' and strategic essentialism in the discussions of inclusion and citizenship, below. However, the point is precisely that there are no fixed answers to any of these matters in the abstract and, rather than reduce equality to a checkbox exercise, questions of identity and difference need to be constantly read into policy and practice in order to fully attend to their significance. As we have seen here, questions of identity are integral to community formation, and positing communities as strong or diverse presents a false conundrum when contemporary communities can only be strong if their diversity is considered. This does not prevent social progress; rather it points to practical ways forward. Featherstone (2012), for example, particularly foregrounds the work that must be done to construct commonality, rather than rely on an attempted approximation of similarity. Taking a somewhat different approach, Massey (2005) suggests that it is less important to build some nominal 'community' for its own sake than it is to consider how to work within the constraints and possibilities presented by complex, heterogeneous society. Regardless of which approach is followed, community strength in diversity demands that we understand how broader societal process of inclusion and exclusion operate.

3. SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND INCLUSION

The role of social exclusion

Social inclusion is more than simply the antonym of social exclusion, but it is the concept of exclusion that has received more attention in general social policy discourse in both academic and political circles. It is useful to pay attention to these narratives of social exclusion for two reasons. First, exclusion is intimately related to inclusion – indeed as Buckmaster & Thomas (2009: 2) note, for many it is “difficult to discuss social inclusion without also discussing social exclusion” – and exclusionary practice is precisely what has initiated demands for inclusion from disability activists (Barnes & Mercer, 2001) as well as from other social movements. Second, the dominant understanding of social exclusion rests on a narrow economic-moral representation that is not a very helpful way of understanding the exclusion of disabled people and therefore must be recognised in order for erroneous conclusions to be dispelled.

The original conceptualisation of ‘social exclusion’ is attributed to the French socialist governments of the 1970s and 80s, and particularly Renee Lenoir, the French Secretary of State for Social Welfare in the 1970s, who identified that certain people “were disconnected from mainstream society in ways that went beyond poverty – for example non-participation in politics, poor health and geographical isolation” (Davies, 2005: 4). There are two key advances here from more traditional understandings of exclusion. First, there is a movement beyond poverty as the single cause of exclusion to include as causal the polarization, differentiation and inequality that derive from poverty. Second, attention is paid to the marginalisation – or social disconnection – that derives from exclusion (Buckmaster & Thomas, 2009; Burchardt *et al*, 1999; Dowling 1999). As such, a more comprehensive understanding is offered that defines social exclusion as “being shut out, fully or partially, from any of the social, economic, political or cultural systems which determine the social integration of a person in society” (Walker & Walker, 1997: 8). The difference between a poverty-only focus and broader attention to social integration issues is particularly apparent in policy responses. While problems understood as poverty elicit some form of redistribution, social exclusion yields measures designed to combat inadequate social participation and integration that require a ‘joined-up’ approach (Room, 1995; Buckmaster & Thomas, 2009).

A further dimension to the new conceptualisation of social exclusion is the recognition that it resulted from being ‘beyond the state’ in terms of “the inadequacy of existing social welfare provisions to meet the changing needs of more diverse populations” (Saloojee, 2003: viii). In other words, exclusion was a result of people not being captured by the state’s social insurance system (Burchardt *et al*, 1999; Dowling, 1999). This was a central feature as the concept became common currency in the UK under New Labour, particularly with the formation of the Social Exclusion Unit (subsequently renamed the Social Exclusion Task Force) in 1997 (Buckmaster & Thomas, 2009; Burchardt *et al*, 1999; Davies, 2005), where the concept was

understood in terms of the failure of the welfare system to capture the collateral damage of industrial retrenchment, with the consequence that certain people could no longer “participate in the normal activities of citizens in that society” (Burchardt *et al*, 1999: 229).

For the British government’s Social Exclusion Unit, the excluded were those who experienced the mutually reinforcing problems of “unemployment, discrimination, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime, bad health and family breakdown” (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2004: 3). Others are more explicit claiming that the excluded “ranged from the physically and mentally disabled to ‘socially maladjusted’ people whose conditions produced mental illness, suicide, drug/alcohol abuse and ‘anti-social behaviour’” (Davies, 2005: 4, citing Pierce, 1999) or, following the definition of those who were “literally excluded from social support”, Buckmaster & Thomas (2009: 2) identify the excluded as “the disabled, single parents and uninsured unemployed people”. When this understanding of *who* is involved intersects with *what* is involved, it is easy to see how disabled people become a part of the category of ‘excluded’. For Burchardt *et al* (1999), the definition of ‘normal activities of citizens’ include consumption, savings, production, and political and social participation which, in broad terms, coincide with the activities of financial independence, employment, and physical and social access to the built environment and leisure activities that are recognised as central to the exclusion of disabled people (Barnes and Mercer, 2010).

Beyond these overarching generalisations, however, ‘social exclusion’ is a contested term, both ill-defined (Buckmaster & Thomas, 2009) and with few attempts made to assess its extent (Burchardt *et al*, 1999). The use of varying definitions, in part, contributes to different understandings of the extent of the problem and its solutions. Charles Murray famously drew on the original emphasis on unemployment and its consequences in his description of an ‘underclass’ in the US, supposedly caused by moral degeneracy and social breakdown (Murray, 1990). This narrative did not have the same resonance in the UK but the idea of social exclusion caused by individual failure in relation to the labour market, rather than structural causation, did carry over (Davies, 2005).

Exclusion of disabled people

This general understanding of social exclusion has significant consequences for the specific understanding of the social exclusion of disabled people. First, it assumes that even while there are other axes of exclusion (sexuality, gender, age and so forth), poverty is ‘the great excluder’ that generates the lack of choice and opportunity enjoyed by wealthier people (Dowling, 1999). While this approach simply ignores how wealth cannot ‘buy’ a disabled person out of many aspects of exclusion such as physical barriers to access, segregated education and employment and so forth, it also underpins the policy response that work is the answer for the end to social exclusion (Davies, 2005). Second, by conflating social exclusion and labour market exclusion, those who are not engaged in paid work “are regarded as less than full members of society” (Buckmaster & Thomas, 2009: 12). This approach

then accepts that those who are simply unable to work are permanently excluded from society, and further ignores productive, but unpaid work, both of which describe the relationship with productive activity for many disabled people. Third, it establishes an economic-moral framework for conceptualising exclusion that understands members of society as either productive or parasitic (Jessop et al, 1988). This is not the place to evaluate the explanatory potential of the underclass debate but, given the dominance of this sort of narrative in ideas around social exclusion, it is perhaps not surprising that it can be difficult to disembed understandings of disabled people from the ideas of being dependent and a burden on the state, both in popular and policy discourses.

Therefore we need to rethink how social exclusion is conceptualised in order to take account of the realities of exclusion for disabled people that are well documented within the field of Disability Studies. Barnes & Mercer (2010) describe first how the welfare state has marginalized disabled people, both in its post-war form where the family wage model and bureaucratic neutrality reinforced divisions between disabled and non-disabled people, and in its current, market-based model that has led to political campaigns by disabled activists against inadequate welfare benefits and services. Following the broader definition of social exclusion outlined above, they then expand on the educational, aspirational and social limitations that derive from segregated education; the welfare dependency, income differentials, and costs of disability that maintain a link between disability and poverty; limitations imposed and prejudices in the workplace; the inadequacy and piecemeal nature of improvements, despite legislation, of physical access in the built environment, adapted housing, and transportation; and the cost, access and attitudinal barriers affecting the possibility of participation in mainstream leisure and social activities (Barnes & Mercer, 2010).

Barnes & Mercer (2010: 104) establish more than a simple thematic set of marginalisations for disabled people in relation to consumption, production and social interaction that far exceed the poverty/worklessness understanding of social exclusion. Importantly, they understand these exclusions as denials of the right for disabled people to live according to their own priorities and capabilities and to exist in public and participate fully in the community. Others have expanded on this idea of exclusion from public space by showing precisely how social and spatial exclusions are mutually constituted in the marginalisation of disabled people. Kitchin (1998) describes how a 'disablist organisation of space' in the form of physical barriers and the existence of segregated spaces, which literally keep disabled people physically 'in their place', intertwine with cultural practices of exclusion to convey to disabled people that they are 'out of place' – that they don't belong. Gabel *et al* (2013) echo the ways in which this socio-spatial isolation is inculcated early in the life of disabled people, through the mechanisms of social and physical segregation that are maintained in the apparently inclusive spaces of mainstream education. Sibley (1995) describes this process of social control, where dominant social groups construct social and spatial boundaries to mark

certain groups as deviant and establish their symbolic and material exclusion as the 'purification of space'.

These empirics cause us to rethink the concept of exclusion away from the standard idea of the 'sliding scale' where an individual can improve their position by their own efforts, particularly in terms of access to the labour market. However Burchardt *et al's* (1999) empirical findings that exclusion is not consistent across its different forms or over time suggest that an in/out binary understanding of inclusion/exclusion is also inadequate. Rather than understand exclusion as a description of fact, it may be more useful to see exclusion as a process or "set of mechanisms that act to detach groups of people from the social mainstream" (Giddens, 1998: 104). This also foregrounds the 'group dimension' of social exclusion (Percy-Smith, 2000: 11) where, although social exclusion is always a particularised, individual experience, "certain groups are arguably at greater risk of social exclusion because they differ in some way from the dominant population or because of their position within society". The important caveat here is that social exclusion cannot be 'read off' from group membership, but that the likelihood of social exclusion is greater because of being a member of that group. In other words, disabled people may well be able to avoid social exclusion – indeed many of us do – but the pressure of the mechanisms applied to disabled people as a group means that individuals are more vulnerable to being socially excluded.

Barnes and Mercer (2010) draw on some of Nancy Fraser's (1997) early work on social justice to explain the processes at work in excluding certain people from full participation. Fraser explains how 'misrecognition', a status inequality based on 'difference' that derives from hierarchies of cultural value, works separately from 'maldistribution' of resources. These respective sets of cultural and economic mechanisms interact to impede individuals from full 'participatory parity' but neither can be reduced to the other. Fraser's explanation is useful for describing the complexity and range of marginalisation among disabled people precisely because the role of cultural expectations about disabled people's interests, capacities and presence can be implicated in their comparative experience of work, poverty, financial needs and expectations and so forth, and vice versa. This provides a far superior model for social exclusion than the one-dimensional idea of exclusion as worklessness, but also starts to imagine ways in which *inclusion* can be inculcated. Moreover, Fraser's (2009) subsequent work introduces a political dimension in the form of the arena in which ideas about (mis)recognition and (mal)distribution are worked out. This political dimension describes social belonging and membership and, as such, determines who has the right to claim equal cultural recognition and resource distribution or, in other words, who has the right to be considered a full member of the political community and have their interests, opinions and contentions taken seriously.

It is important to understand the dimensions of social exclusion because of the impact that it has on excluded individuals, who are not afforded equal rights to full participation and a fulfilling life, but also because of the

implications for communities where marginalisation fosters dissonance and dissent, and society at large which cannot present itself as democratic if its members are subject to exclusionary practices (Saloojee, 2003). However standard understandings of exclusion invoke descriptions of disadvantage that do little to help us progress. Some of the work discussed here has, instead, moved us closer to an understanding of exclusion as the denial of rights. In fact, for Walker & Walker (1997: 8), social exclusion is “the denial (non-realization) of the civil, political and social rights of citizenship”. Therefore, citizenship can be a useful lens through which to examine exclusion but, as Buckmaster & Thomas (2009) note, the concept of citizenship also provides the possibility for an active understanding of participation that affords more agency to individuals as opposed to the passive condition of ‘being excluded’, as well as a more substantial basis for identifying positive actions more broadly. In other, as well as enhancing our understanding of exclusion, the concept of citizenship offers a productive way to work towards inclusion and therefore it is citizenship that we turn to next.

Inclusion as citizenship

Citizenship as rights and duties

Contemporary theories of citizenship depart, more or less explicitly, from T.H. Marshall’s (1950) seminal work in ‘Citizenship and Social Class’ which distinguished between three sets of citizenship rights: civil, political, and social. Civil citizenship comprises the rights necessary for individual freedoms – liberty of the person, freedom of speech, the right to own property and enter into contracts, and the right to justice. Among these, the right to justice is distinctive “because it is the right to defend and assert all one’s rights on terms of equality with others and by due process of law” (Marshall, 1950: 10-11). Civil citizenship therefore establishes citizens as free and equal beings in relation to each other and the state, as protected by the courts of justice. The emergence of political citizenship established the right for citizens to exercise political power through holding office or voting, thus extending to citizens the right to exert influence in parliament and local government. Finally, social citizenship, organised through the institutions of education, health and social services, refers to “the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in the society” (Marshall, 1950: 11) and, as such, might be understood as socio-economic rights. Extending beyond Marshall’s definition, some theorists also recognise distinct economic, cultural and environmental citizenships (Wilson, 2006).

For Marshall, citizenship principally involved establishing equality of status, underpinned by social rights. This “urge towards a fuller measure of equality” (Marshall, 1950: 29) was necessary to establish a certain baseline for social and economic provision via redistribution, but also fostered a sense of common culture through the universal consumption of welfare and other services. Marshall did not see equality in terms of generating equal outcomes

for all citizens, but as establishing equal freedoms to access full citizenship. Social rights are of a different character to civil and political rights because they are not defined precisely, rather they entail a certain public expectation about the entitlements and well-being of citizens. As such, there will always be debate about how these expectations should manifest in practice (Buckmaster & Thomas, 2009) but further, as Smith (1989) notes, social rights will always be vulnerable to revocation given their statutory nature. However, given that citizenship confers a certain expectation of social and economic well-being as a right rather than an act of benevolence (Buckmaster & Thomas, 2009), understanding social inclusion in terms of citizenship offers a considerable extension beyond explanations constructed simply in terms of poverty and income inequality. In part, this derives from the fact that social citizenship places a set of expectations on the state in terms of establishing equality of status. While Marshall's analysis was based on overcoming class-based inequality, more recent extension of his work to encounter other inequalities have meant that, in some cases, the state is required to exert extra effort to ensure that equal capabilities to access a standard set of rights is realised (Takacs, 2006). For disabled people, for example, this manifests as additional benefits and service provisions (Morris, 2005).

A further benefit of understanding inclusion in terms of citizenship is that it extends beyond the idea of socio-economic well-being for people based on equality of status, to the re-conceptualisation of inclusion as the right to full and equal participation in society (Buckmaster & Thomas, 2009). Marshall (1950) considered that establishing a baseline of socio-economic rights served as a pre-requisite for citizens both to operate as productive members of society and to be able to exercise the broader set of political and civil rights that constitute full citizenship. Others have subsequently echoed Marshall, recognising that social inclusion policies reflect far more than concerns about material welfare, but cement full citizenship in the form of the democratic right to participate (see, for example, Rumery, 2006; Steinert, 2003). In other words, full social inclusion is necessary for individuals to operate productively and engage in the participatory networks that more contemporary ideas recognise as social capital (Abbot & Sapsford, 2005). In fact, for some, social exclusion is defined precisely as a lack of social capital (Percy-Smith, 2000). 'Inclusion as citizenship' is, then, simultaneously concerned with recognising the rights of individuals *and* with developing stronger communities. Marshall's definition of ideal citizenship, as full participation in the community, therefore interweaves citizenship as a set of rights in a reciprocal relationship with citizenship as the responsibility to participate in the community.

However, although Marshall understood the rights and responsibilities of citizenship as reciprocal, his was a liberal account that emphasised the 'status' of citizenship and stressed the importance of rights. Recently the idea of citizenship comprising the passive status of a rights-bearer has been increasingly replaced by attention to questions of citizen responsibilities and active participation (see, for example, Alexander, 2008; Dickinson *et al*, 2008; Millner, 2008). This development harks back to long-standing communitarian principles of political participation constituting the 'good life' (Oldfield, 1998),

which have also held appeal for politicians responding to apparently dysfunctional communities and low levels of political engagement (Morris, 2005). It has, for example, underpinned recent approaches to immigration where attention to the ability of immigrants to speak English has been couched in terms of being the mechanism that would “enable them to engage as active citizens in economic, social and political life” (Home Office, 2002: 30). The duties of citizenship are not formally laid down in a single document but are recognised either in criminal and regulatory law or through practice. For example, citizens are prohibited from certain actions such as murder and required to fulfil others such as pay taxes, but there are also a set of normalised social expectations that exist beyond the legal framework, such as work, volunteering, and voting, that can be understood in terms of common interests, co-operative action and contributing to the good of wider society (Ministry of Justice, 2009).

In the context of citizen duties, an instrumentalist attempt to inculcate active citizenship as responsibility for self and others via a top-down imposition of obligations has no basis in communitarian political philosophy, in which community participation has no purpose beyond the relationships themselves. In short, communitarians understand responsibility as a pre-condition of freedom that people want to take on, but not something that can be imposed (Davies, 2005). Moreover, while political attention has been given over to balancing rights with responsibilities, a somewhat alternative vision of ‘active citizenship’ within academic debates focuses more on the idea of citizenship as an active construction rather than a passive status conferred by the state. In this version, citizenship is reconceptualised “as a social practice that individuals engage in beyond the state, through organizations of civil society” (Ehrkamp and Leitner 2003: 131). The difference here is subtle – both forms of active citizenship rely on an active, participatory role from citizens, but the latter understands the construction of citizenship itself as the result of an interaction between the state and civil society, rather than something established by the state and then bestowed on subjects.

In practice, these ideas around active citizenship raise the question of what is to be done in relation to local government aims to bolster civic participation. For some theorists, the decline in formal political engagement points to a move to identify alternative methods for making sure voices from within communities are heard (Clarke and Newman, 2007) leading, for example, to new sorts of spaces for deliberation and engagement (Cornwall & Coelho, 2006). Still others have critiqued measures such as these on the grounds that they lack representativeness and consequently threaten the universality of citizenship, preferring instead mechanisms such as citizenship education and devolution of power to local communities which could serve as the basis for a wider recommitment to participation across all community members (Bellamy, 2008). There is insufficient space here to consider the relative merits of different strategies for active participation but, with inclusion in mind, it is worth recognising that active participation as posited in Ehrkamp and Leitner’s model stresses the basic *right* of all citizens to participate fully in the life of

their community (Alexander, 2008; Lister 1998). In other words, it is beholden on communities to ensure that individuals are able to participate.

Following a slightly different tack, the second issue that arises from considering Ehrkamp and Leitner's version of active citizenship, is that participation is not as absent as we might be led to believe, but it might take a different form than expected. For example, in a study conducted in low-income areas of Newcastle, Alexander (2008) shows that, contrary to popular negative perceptions, socially excluded young people were thoroughly involved in their neighbourhoods, engaged in voluntary and unpaid care activities and expressed frustration at their lack of inclusion in local decision-making about matters that were of significant importance to them. Lister (1998) argues that the understanding of active citizenship needs to be broadened from formal understandings of participation in governance and politics for the good of the wider community, to include this more informal sort of politics understood in terms of the ways in which people work together to improve the qualities of their own lives as well as the conditions for others, and society at large. This re-definition of active citizenship stresses new practices such as social action and volunteering (Lister *et al*, 2002) reflecting 'bottom-up' citizenship which "denotes initiatives and actions undertaken by citizens independently of the state" as opposed to 'top-down' citizenship involving "rights and responsibilities allocated and practices sanctioned, encouraged, or required by the state" (Painter, 2005: 6).

Participatory engagement will always involve a re-working and negotiation of the relations that link individuals to their communities because there is no fixed agreement on how people should participate and what they should offer or receive (Hall, 2000; Buckmaster & Thomas, 2009). Ultimately, in this vision citizenship morphs into proactive engagement – the much sought after local commitment – but necessarily becomes a more flexible arrangement that reflects the identities and concerns of the participants (Beckett, 2005). However it also allows the idea of belonging to, and conducting activities within, multiple communities of identity as local identities become 'more precarious' (Purcell, 2003; and see Doehring, 2008). As such, this definition of active citizenship involves more than adding informal activity to formal citizenship, but demands instead a reimagining of what constitutes citizenship *and* community. These broadening ideas about citizenship may be valuable for local governments that are concerned with the levels of engagement among their communities, but they are also positive for disabled people who have not, theoretically, fared well in a 'rights for responsibilities' trade off. As Morris (2005) notes, disabled people might not be able to perform certain expected duties or may particularly be in need of the benefit of rights *before* responsibilities can be fulfilled. As such, a more flexible, negotiated understanding of responsibilities may well facilitate the recognition and re-valuing of certain contributory activities undertaken by disabled people. However, these ideas butt up against certain cherished notions of the membership and belonging that underpin citizenship and it is these to which we turn next.

Citizenship as membership and belonging

Before proceeding to discuss the possibilities of citizenship as the basis of inclusion for disabled people, the ideas discussed above around more flexible arrangements between the state and civil society demand that we return, briefly, to the question of ‘difference’ to examine how it is dealt with in theories of citizenship. Marshall’s (1950) original work has been critiqued for its general inattention to difference between citizens, other than class divisions. The communitarian tradition has been subject to similar critique for the implicit assumption that communities are “all homogeneous and have a moral voice” (Valentine, 2001: 130). These criticisms are important because of the way in which a mechanism for inclusion – citizenship – actively produces exclusions (Isin, 2005; Staeheli, 2008). These exclusions are explicit in formal citizenship where a full set of citizenship rights and duties is only secured within states where an individual holds full membership, but also manifests less formally where equality before the law, in the form of universal citizenship, does not translate into fair and equal outcomes in practice. Standardised, normative assumptions about accepted behaviours, practices, cultural traditions, identities and so forth, do not coincide with self-realisation for everyone, resulting in individuals or groups becoming marginalised and excluded (Lister, 2007). In other words, a *de facto* set of socio-cultural norms that tend to reflect dominant interests establishes an internal homogeneity that excludes in a different way from the formal status of ‘non-citizen’ (Staeheli, 2008). Here, then, we see that citizenship is as much about membership and belonging as it is about the status and rights of social citizenship, with consequences for who is able to participate and for what sort of activities are cast as legitimate.

For some, the necessary response to these *de facto* exclusions is to reform citizenship in a way that respects difference. Will Kymlicka (2000) is perhaps the most well known of the advocates for a pluralist form of citizenship which precisely recognises that some citizens have needs and requirements that are different from a standardised norm. For Kymlicka, because diverse interests are not catered for within universal citizenship, equal access to citizenship can only be accommodated via group rights. Critics argue that these ‘special rights’ undermine universal citizenship, but what concerns us most in relation to Kymlicka’s pluralism is that, with its focus on the marginalisation of minority cultures, groups are necessarily marked as part of a distinctive culture with a coherent cultural identity. While some disability activists assert a positive identity for disabled people that embraces the idea of being different, still many others do not subscribe to this perspective. Some disabled people specifically reject a tag of ‘difference’ as a hegemonic technique of normalisation and marginalisation, while others do not identify positively with their impairment or illness (Beckett, 2005), and still others are concerned that assertion of a common identity ignores differences among disabled people based on race, gender, sexuality and so forth (Priestley, 1995). Regardless of the relative merit of approaches to difference among disabled people, it is fair to say that standard accounts of pluralism are not especially useful for negotiating a collective identity centred on disability.

Still, the need to challenge negative, essentialist cultural representations, or counter exclusions from the non-disabled world suggest that it is useful to find a way forward as a group, albeit not one defined in terms of a discrete cultural identity. In practice, campaigns to break down the difference between disabled and non-disabled people, i.e. to assert 'sameness', have co-existed with those that seek recognition of disabled people as a distinct group (Beckett, 2005). In that context it might be helpful to recognise the distinctions between assertions of a strong group cultural identity, strategic political assertions of commonality around a common need or to counter exclusion (such as the Independent Living Movement), and the universal demand to be recognised as equal persons with the same entitlements as any other. I return below to the issue of difference within citizenship as it pertains to disability. Suffice to draw an interim conclusion here that attention to the ways in which different subjectivities experience citizenship is important both for the individual but also for social inclusion itself, with broader consequences for communities and democratic participation as a whole.

Citizenship as exclusion of disabled people

In theory, universal citizenship establishes equal rights and duties for all members across the domains of citizenship, by which we mean civil, political, social, economic, cultural and ecological citizenships (Wilson, 2006). We have seen how the idea of universal citizenship is complicated by people having different requirements before they can achieve equal status and how membership and belonging establishes certain norms that fail to respond to different subject positions. Here we look precisely at how 'universal rights and duties for equal members' manifests in practice for disabled people. Noting how the perspectives of disabled people and language of disability are 'singularly absent' from citizenship debates, Morris (2005) aims to reclaim ground by taking three concepts promoted by disabled people as a starting point for understanding citizenship as it pertains to disability – self-determination, participation and contribution – and the remainder of this section follows that lead.

The exercise of full citizenship assumes *self-determination*, or free choice and autonomy, which are bundled with health and wellbeing, quality of life, justice, freedom of belief and so forth under civil citizenship (Wilson, 2006) as pre-requisites for freedom. To achieve equal status, some disabled people require additional resources to support self-determination, through personal assistance or specialist equipment for example, and when these are inadequate, self-determination is undermined. For example, Rumery (2006) describes how Direct Payments, the very mechanism designed to foster disabled people's choice and control over their own care, can serve as the basis of exclusion when resources are inadequate. Practices such as unequal access to health care and discrimination in education and employment act as barriers to self-determination because they mean that disabled people are unequally sustained as civic participants. Moreover, self-determination is directly challenged when choice and control over how to go about daily life is taken from disabled people when dependency is forced through institutionalisation (Morris, 2005).

Participation can be understood as formal political citizenship but, in much the same vein as the more flexible understanding of active citizenship discussed above, Morris (2005) understands participation in relation to inclusion in mainstream society and participation in the institutions of daily life – family, communities and the nation-state, and therefore in the more informal sense of political citizenship. Therefore participation includes activity that falls under the rubric of formal politics – voting and holding office – but extends to civic participation, advocacy, lobbying and public decision making within the smaller scales of the community or even the family (Wilson, 2006). Participation is therefore a fundamental aspect of the communitarian principle of engaging in public affairs as fulfilment in itself, and at the heart of efforts across different scales of government to re-engage citizenry in community. And yet there are both resource-based and attitudinal barriers to public roles for disabled people. Poverty, lack of access, lack of tailored support, inadequate resourcing, and unequal access to health care all undermine the capacity of disabled people to have a public presence (Morris, 2005) echoing, for example, feminist claims that financial and time constraints limit the presence of women in the public sphere (see Werbner & Yuval-Davis, 1999, for example).

However, even putting aside how disabled people are hampered by resource and discrimination barriers, attitudinal barriers remain in the form of characterisations of disabled people as recipients of care who are necessarily without the capacity to participate as active citizens (Morris, 2005; Rumery, 2006). The problem of negative assumptions also occurs in a broader sense, where often disabled people are seen as ‘not belonging’ in the local community (Morris, 2005), as attested to by the exclusion of disabled people from public space (Kitchin, 1998; Sibley, 1995) which at its most extreme takes the form of harassment, hate crime and violence against disabled people (Quarmby, 2011). Both of these sets of attitudinal barriers reflect misrecognitions that deny disabled people the supposedly universal right to membership, either by being cast as dependent and therefore not a full citizen (as with children) or as culturally distinct from ‘normal society’ and therefore without a valid contribution. While particular measures such as the government’s ‘Access to Elected Office’ programme aim to correct the erasure of disabled people from public life, without the existence of adequate social rights alongside a recasting of disabled people in the public imagination, the lack of disabled people occupying the vast array of formal and informal public roles will go unchallenged.

Morris (2005) understands *contribution* largely in terms of the responsibilities inherent in social and economic citizenship, defined respectively by Wilson (2006) as social inclusion and community connectedness, and fulfilling a range of economic roles including income generation and consumption. Just as with political participation (a contribution in itself) disabled people need social rights and cultural recognition in order to be supported to make a contribution in the form of paid work. This is both a matter of justice and of good economic sense given that tax contributions, reduction in benefit

expenditure and increased consumption power all result from disabled people moving into work. The media-fuelled vilification of recipients of disability benefits reifies the notion that disabled people claim rights from the state without fulfilling the responsibilities of socio-economic contribution (Briant *et al*, 2011); a narrative which casts disabled people either as dependent or as scroungers. This caricature misses the real problem of disabled people not having adequate support which in turn undermines the possibility of addressing inadequate support and discrimination that serve to limit that contribution. For instance, Beckett (2005) notes how the ‘good citizen’ is recognised as one who attains qualifications, paid employment and lives independently, but disabled people are socialised into low expectations through segregated education and routinely experience workplace discrimination, making it harder to get or keep a job.

However, the idea of socio-economic contribution is not limited to paid work, as already discussed in relation to the expanded notion of active citizenship. As Morris (2005) notes, disabled people do a considerable amount of work, such as through caring, volunteering, and advocacy within Disabled People’s Organisations (DPOs). Failing to understand these contributions as *contributions* reflects the ways in which understandings of citizenship are not constructed in a bottom-up fashion that reflects the concerns of all citizens, and redefining what is understood as a contribution could provide a more nuanced understanding of how many people – disabled and non-disabled alike – contribute to the community. Moreover, as British society increasingly shifts towards a ‘rights for responsibilities’ model, the very idea of full citizenship rights for disabled people risks falling foul of a tautologous trap which establishes ‘making a contribution’ as a condition of access to full citizenship rights, but then refuses to deny the work done by disabled people as ‘making a contribution’.

The question of reciprocity in the form of rights and responsibilities raises a further issue in that “for disabled people, social rights are necessary in order to fulfil these responsibilities” (Morris, 2005: 27). It is certainly true that some disabled people need investment prior to being fully productive, but it is important to recognise that this is not an exclusive property of disabled people. Under Marshall’s classical model of citizenship, the state provides socio-economic support in a range of formats – health, education, welfare and social services – which allow for individuals to act as full citizens in the civil, political and social realms. While some disabled people may require extra support, the provision of sufficient socio-economic rights to exist as a full member of society is universal, not extraordinary, and the question around the provision of social rights for disabled people really “is about whether the state is meeting its obligations to help you meet yours” (Rumery, 2006: 636).

It is clear, then, that some disabled people do not have access to full citizenship because choice and control related to matters such as social care are denied routinely; inadequate resourcing limits available choices in practice; practical barriers persist, such as inadequate physical access but also societal features like the dominance of an oral culture in our public and

political systems; attitudinal barriers that limit both the chance to exist equally in public space and the expectations of disabled people, in turn limit what opportunities are available to participate in society; or, most likely, some mutually reinforcing combination of these exclusions. Ultimately, inadequate social provision coincides with the matter of misrecognition, such that disabled people often are not expected to be autonomous citizens capable of independence, decision-making and productive work. This misrecognition in turn feeds back into the opportunities presented to disabled people such that the *right* to have the responsibilities of citizenship is denied (Morris, 2005), thereby apparently legitimising the questioning of support via welfare and benefits; a truly vicious circle.

Imagining citizenship as inclusion for disabled people

While disabled people are *de facto* denied full access to citizenship, it is not difficult to see how citizenship could be reimagined to be inclusive of everyone. Drawing on Kabeer, Lister (2007) establishes what excluded groups need for citizenship to be re-constructed in an inclusive format, which provides a useful framework for understanding the more specific requirement of how citizenship can be made inclusive for disabled people. Lister suggests that inclusive citizenship encompasses the four values of *self-determination* in the form of autonomy and control over one's life; *recognition* of all people as valuable alongside recognition of their differences; *justice*, as the principle that fairness sometimes requires people to be treated the same and sometimes requires different treatment; and *solidarity* in terms of the capacity to act with others in claims for justice and recognition. It is perhaps useful to understand self-determination and recognition as the practices that make citizenship equal – and thus the objective for disabled people as well as other marginalised groups, justice as the mechanism for generating the flexibility that creates inclusion, and solidarity as a viable outcome of creating a form of citizenship that is truly inclusive. Thus, at the intersection of self-determination and justice, everyone has equal rights to autonomy but different sets of needs to achieve that autonomy. While this is no more true for disabled people than any other group, the denial of such rights for disabled people may well be thoroughly debilitating

Where recognition and justice intersect the solutions may not be so obvious because they appear to require a sea-change in how we value each other. Amartya Sen's work on capability is instructive here. Sen's work (1985, 1999) is premised on the concept of functionings, which essentially describes a person's chosen way of life or what they value doing or being; and capabilities, which comprise functionings alongside the opportunity to pursue a desired combination of these functionings. These terms can appear confusing in a disability context: Sen's reference to capability bears no relation to innate capacities of disabled people, capability as measured by work capability assessments, or functioning as measured in functional assessments. Central to Sen's idea of capabilities is that quality of life depends on the freedom to choose and achieve functionings that are valuable

to the person. As Crowther (2008) observes, for Sen, capabilities, rather than income, are the better markers of equality and well-being, because income is merely the basis for providing commodities that have certain characteristics that affect an individual's capabilities. And it is capabilities, not income, that constitute the underlying opportunities that facilitate being a certain way (e.g. healthy, educated) or participating in certain activities (e.g. employment, family life, participation and public life). However income is not the sole determinant of capabilities, rather the environment plays a crucial role such that the presence or absence of healthcare, public transport and an accessible built environment will have an impact on capabilities. Those who are disabled by society live in an environment where those freedoms are curtailed (Crowther, 2008). Thus, for real equality, disabled people need to have the appropriate support to facilitate living a life they value according to their own terms, rather than some standardised metric.

In relation to the intersection of recognition and justice, all individuals have different needs in relation to income requirements and different experience of environmental conditions. Thus individuals have different support needs to access their chosen capability sets. Given that recognition is based on the idea that all people are valuable, the key point here is that valuing a person comprises both providing the support needs to allow free choice of capabilities, and then not limiting which capability sets constitute useful contributions to society based on arbitrary measures of success and well-being. The current absence of this way of thinking establishes attitudinal barriers towards disabled people based on both disregard of the person, and low expectations of what they can achieve. To overcome attitudinal barriers based on these stereotypical caricatures requires what Johnston (2003) describes as a reflexive approach to citizenship which, rather than fixing citizenship as a set of rights and/or responsibilities, assumes that, in practice, inclusion in a socially diverse environment requires subjects to apply a "reflective, self-critical and dynamic" approach to their expectations (and value systems) concerning membership and participation. Ultimately, if people are equally valued then communities can come together in productive ways to articulate and meet needs, serving both the interests of groups and individuals, and the community at large. As Fraser (2009) articulates, the antidote to the problems of maldistribution and misrecognition involves establishing a space for representation – a political space in both the formal and the informal sense – where these matters can be resolved. This is what establishes solidarity, the final component of Lister's inclusive citizenship, which can serve as the basis for meeting individual and group needs and constructing strong and active communities. And yet the discussion above has considered precisely how disabled people do not experience reflexive, inclusive citizenship, or have equal access to public/political space to make demands. Exactly how we might work towards these conditions in practice is the subject matter for the next section.

4. WHAT DO INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES LOOK LIKE?

Thus far we have seen how social complexity requires local communities to move away from traditional ideas about participation, membership and activity if they are to be fully inclusive. At the same time, local governments have very practical concerns around the social, economic and political development of their localities, which are increasingly shaped by the drive towards citizen and community involvement in terms of decision making and, sometimes, self-provisioning. In this context the idea of social capital appeals, but unequal access to its mechanisms can result in the reification of existing social inequalities. If we are to think about inclusive communities in ways that are meaningful, rather than tokenistic, for disabled people, the concept of ‘social quality’ may be more useful than social capital. Social quality offers a more individual centred understanding because it understands society in terms of how the collective identity of the community relies on the self-realisation of its members (Phillips, 2003). In other words, the way in which social networks strengthen communities remains central, but social quality incorporates the extent to which all individuals experience socio-economic security, inclusion and empowerment to develop to their full potential (Walker, 1998; Lin *et al*, 2009). It is from this broader perspective that we can now think about inclusion in relation to community development and, more particularly, what the inclusion of disabled people might mean and how it can take place in practice.

Community development and inclusion

Governments have long been interested in communities and community development. “Community participation has become the new orthodoxy for local governance” (Woods, 2010: 7) and the current emphasis on fairness and social responsibility (Gilchrist *et al*, 2010) theoretically allows the intention of tackling social exclusion to dovetail with the ever-present desire for development. There is a long and rich tradition of intellectual interest in community development, drawing from across the social sciences as well as reflecting a wide variety of popular concerns about how emerging trends in economic growth intersect with social, environmental and political sustainability (Craig *et al*, 2008). As a consequence community development has been defined in a number of different ways, but in its current form it can broadly be understood as making people active partners in development rather than passive recipients of decisions made for them (Gilchrist *et al*, 2010). In this context it is well established that a process of ‘capacity building’ works by investing in the human and social capital of individuals and communities, which allows them both to thrive and, thereby, to engage in community development (Demos, 2003). In other words, capacity building helps people to come together to build better communities.

In terms of how capacity building can be done inclusively – thereby nudging the emphasis on social capital towards the idea of social quality – a Demos report “identified three key dimensions of ‘inclusion’ relevant to the work of community-based organisations” (Demos, 2003: 5). These are 1) ensuring

that all individuals have access to social goods such as welfare, housing, legal advice, social services, public transport, training and employment, in accordance with the basic entitlement for all citizens; 2) developing skills, and particularly leadership skills, to empower individuals and communities to affect the balance of power between citizens, government and employers; and 3) establishing institutional trust to facilitate the new collaborative relationship between community organisations and local government (Demos, 2003). There are two matters raised by these three dimensions that are of particular relevance here. First, the Demos report notes local government arrangements do not centralise local community concerns sufficiently, particularly those from marginalised groups, and as such institutional trust is not fully developed. While this report is now 10 years old, both anecdotal and published evidence (see Duffy, 2013, for example) suggest that there is still work to do on the relationship between individuals, community organisations and local government.

The second matter turns on exactly who is to be included. The Demos report does recognise that marginalised groups need to be empowered, but the emphasis appears to be on 'acting collectively to demand change' without significantly problematising how that collective standpoint is to be achieved, which risks succumbing to the tendency among developers and planners to assume that the community speaks with one voice (Freeman, 2010). This focus will not resonate with those disabled people who, while wanting to be part of a changed relationship between citizens and government, also find the source of their exclusion within the community itself. A slightly different definition of constructing communities as active partners in development suggests that the process of community development needs first to bring people together to establish local concerns and to develop skills to address those concerns, and only then to draw that set of understandings and skills into a new relationship with the institutions that order their daily lives (Taylor *et al*, 2001). As already recognised, disabled people are often subject to routine exclusion from standard procedures of social capital development (Partington, 2005). In this context, lessons concerning inclusive citizenship, and particularly how disabled people often require more than just access to the standard social goods required to constitute the full citizen, take on a specific significance in relation to these ideas promoting 'full community inclusion from the beginning'.

For some, a central plank of community development concerns developing and helping people engage with social networks (Gilchrist *et al*, 2010), and there are models of community development that emphasise inclusion within the community of this sort. For example, reflecting some of the ideas established as important for recognising disabled people as full citizens, 'Asset Based Community Development' (ABCD) is premised on the notion that the quality and strength of community life are, in part, dependent on empowering communities and their individual members (Barr & Hashagen, 2000); focuses on assets rather than 'deficiencies' (McKnight, 2003); and specifically recognises the value of alternative 'gifts and talents' as productive contributions outside waged labour and the capitalist market place in diverse

economies (Cameron and Gibson, 2008). Similarly, a report produced by a consortium led by the Centre for Inclusive Futures (nd) insists on rejecting a system that distinguishes between active citizens and recipients of care, and foregrounds as a starting point people defining their situations, challenges, aspirations and needs, rather than the a pre-given understanding of what qualities are necessary to be deemed 'making a contribution'.

It is beyond the scope of this report to consider the processes by which different understandings of inclusion might be brought to bear on the range of community development models. It is, however, worth recognising that work around community development may provide a productive intersection for disseminating ideas about inclusiveness into the broader community consciousness, particularly at a time when activism among excluded groups has promoted the idea of community development specifically in terms of active engagement with a diverse range of interests (Lotz, 2008). At the same time, it is important not to assume that this is an organic connection which automatically introduces ideas about inclusion across the range of narratives concerning community development. In practical terms, then, it is important to foreground the specificity of models of inclusion that work to recognise the values of disabled people, in order that opportunities for collaboration with other community based organisations and with government can be exploited.

Inclusive community and disability

One definition of inclusive community specifically orientated to the needs of disabled people suggests:

An inclusive community for people with disabilities is one that is open and accessible for all. Each member of the community is able to take an active part in the community. Each person is safe and empowered. Citizens' voices are heard and their contributions acknowledged and valued by the community. In an inclusive community each person is respected as a citizen who can fully exercise his or her rights and responsibilities. Each member brings unique strengths, resources, abilities, and capabilities.

Building an Inclusive Tucson (2009)

At first glance this definition is not dissimilar to understandings of inclusion within the community development genre. However, for disabled people 'taking an active part' has frequently not entailed inclusion because a normalised hierarchy of social values means that we are not accepted, on our own terms, as equals. In this context, disability activists have fought to go "beyond an understanding of inclusion as 'participation' in a range of community activities and life domains, towards a vision of a reconstituted community that is fundamentally different in the way it understands its membership and the activities, rights, and responsibilities of these members" (Wilson, 2006: 24).

For disabled people, all too often participation has meant simply ‘presence’, in the form of being physically located in the community – which is, in itself, an advance on institutionalisation and inaccessible built environments limiting even physical integration – but “physical integration is a precondition for social inclusion, *not an end in itself*” (Gomez, 2011: 361, emphasis mine). In other words, being physically present in the community is necessary but insufficient for inclusion as active engagement. Schleien *et al* (1999) make a useful distinction between three ‘levels of acceptance’: 1) physical integration, as the right to physical access; 2) functional inclusion, as the ability to function successfully in an environment facilitated by reasonable adjustments to allow access to goods and services, and 3) social inclusion in the form of social acceptance enabling positive interaction with others. It is social inclusion that facilitates both a private identity for disabled people as social beings who engage in personal relationships, but also a public identity as people who choose where they wish to be included and with which communities they want to engage (Wilson, 2006). The ‘Better Together’ project in Caboolture, Australia, expands on this understanding of social acceptance, recognising that successful community inclusion includes a sense of belonging in the community and fulfilling significant roles within the community (Johnson *et al*, 2011).

Both occupying broader public roles and engaging in decision-making were shown to be important to disabled people in a study designed to get the ‘insider perspective’ on disabled people’s expectations of inclusion (in contradistinction to the World Health Organisation’s definitions and classifications). Hammel *et al* (2008) found that the desire for decisional autonomy was a dominant theme in a broad sense across all aspects of a disabled person’s identity. As one respondent articulated, it’s about “doing what you want, when you want, with who you want, it encompasses choice, control and freedom” (study respondent, cited in Hammel *et al*, 2008). Moreover, respondents articulated the need for support to maintain this autonomy in participation, echoing themes articulated in narratives of independent living and associated personal assistance (Barnes & Mercer, 2010). The respondents also emphasized the need for opportunities in a more explicit sense than is commonly articulated in models of inclusive community. People claimed the right to work, buy a house, drive a car and so forth, but also expected recognition of their broader contribution to society in the form of work, volunteering, and supporting others as fulfilment of responsibilities and obligations (Hammel *et al*, 2008). This question of expected societal roles speaks directly to the idea of disabled people’s rights, as full citizens, to have the same responsibilities as those adopted by non-disabled people.

The idea of creating more inclusive communities establishes new social roles for previously excluded disabled people, but it also generates new sets of expectations for communities. Jenkin & Wilson (2009: 23-4) describe this in terms of different orientations in how the work of inclusion happens in practice. They differentiate between 1) ‘individual person-centred work’ in the form of direct responses to the needs of a disabled person designed by the

person and those who assist them; 2) opportunities created in the community, where community members in whatever guise advocate for the needs of disabled people; and 3) broad level community change concerned with resourcing, skill acquisition, and knowledge and understanding of various social groups. This last, transformative agenda “is most powerful when it includes or is led by people with a disability [but] it does not always include people with a disability as actors” (Jenkin & Wilson, 2009: 24). Jenkin & Wilson’s (2009) classification of the impetus for inclusion work also foregrounds the question of who is the primary actor in engendering change. The centrality of disabled people in their orientations is sporadic in that while disabled people are centrally placed in terms of deciding what needs to happen and, sometimes, being the agent of change, the expectation is for the wider community to take responsibility for identifying and establishing more inclusionary environments.

The logic deployed here is that “real participation and inclusion in the community does not just happen... but requires the commitment of all community members” (Soresi, 2011:16), on the grounds that lack of opportunities for inclusion is what generates dependence, rather than any innate qualities of disabled people themselves. The first step towards community members taking responsibility for, and action towards, establishing inclusionary rather than exclusionary conditions, is engendering attitudinal change within the community (Soresi, 2011). As discussed above in relation to citizenship, this change relies on modification of social expectations such that attention is paid to strengths and capabilities of disabled people rather than perceived deficiencies (Olson *et al*, 1997) or what some understand as valorising social roles. Some argue that this sort of attitudinal change is best fostered through adopting a range of practices including 1) modelling acceptance of disabled people, 2) dispensing accurate information about disabled people and 3) creating opportunities for interaction between disabled and non-disabled people on equal terms (Deisinger, 2000). Still others find that it is really only this latter behaviour – interaction – that engenders change in attitudes towards disabled people and, further, that this must take the form of contact on equal terms, which gives disabled and non-disabled people sufficient chance to get to know each other, and which involves common activities and goals such as working together or being part of the same family (Abrams, 2010; Paolini *et al*, 2006). Exactly what comprises ‘contact on equal terms’ in ways that engender effective attitudinal change will be discussed further below in relation to case studies of good practice around inclusion. However it is worth recognising here that even professional support staff have differing ideas about what constitutes participation and inclusion for disabled people (Johnson *et al*, 2011) meaning that ‘attitudinal change’ within the community can be as much a question of understanding as of personal and political commitment.

The idea of responsibility for the inclusion of disabled people lying within the community is not without controversy and for some would be considered a backward step that cedes agency to the wider community rather than claiming it for disabled people. Further, the idea of social role valorisation has also

been criticised on the grounds that it manifests as normalisation of disabled people according to rules laid down by non-disabled people (on both these points, see Barnes & Mercer, 2010: ch6). In this context, an alternative approach to inclusion is embedded in the history of disabled activists effectively demanding sets of rights that cement the equality of disabled people as a distinct community. In other words disabled people have asserted their rights to exist on equal grounds as *disabled people*, without deferral to how they are viewed by broader society. This perspective has been underpinned precisely by disabled people claiming agency and 'doing it for themselves' – in service user involvement arrangements, Centres for Independent Living, and other user-led organisations – rather than having decisions made, and actions taken, on their behalf (Barnes and Mercer, 2010).

There are two matters to attend to here. The first is to do with not deferring to some external referee over what constitutes inclusion for disabled people. Simply put, disabled people know that best. But the second is a far more pragmatic decision. Where progress towards inclusion is slow, as exemplified by Jenny Morris' (2014) recent assessment of progress towards the Independent Living Strategy for example, decisions around different emphases may turn on the matter of practical questions about where to focus limited resources rather than differences of political commitment or deep ideological divisions. In practice, then, the controversial nature of these different foci is perhaps weakened by the recognition that the assertion of rights for disabled people, in the form of the extra resources necessary for full autonomy alongside the cultural recognition of the value of disabled people's contribution, meshes well with a differently focussed assertion that society at large needs to do better at including disabled people on their own terms. The larger point here is that disabled people should be able to exist in both worlds – in a distinct disabled community with a range of needs that should be met, and as full members of society. This in turn responds to wider questions about difference within the disabled community – as a strategic group, political identity can be asserted to achieve rights that precisely demand recognition of different needs reflecting superdiversity and our fluid and overlapping identities.

In that context, this project precisely concerns moving closer to full inclusion in the broader community, which demands a change in wider society. It is not the job of disabled people to secure this change – in much the same way that it is not the job of women to end patriarchy, for example – but some disabled people have taken this on as part of their social role and they are very well positioned to do so. Inevitably each interaction will involve power relations that need recognition and negotiation, but the mission of creating more inclusive communities necessarily involves the community. On the other hand, the idea of inclusion must foreground the ways in which disabled people have rights as *disabled people*, rather than because we might be capable of moving into other roles where wider society retains control over what is deemed to be productive and useful. These concepts can be difficult to synthesise in the abstract, but less so in practice. In Hammel *et al's* (2008) study, disabled

people specifically expected individual needs and contributions to be met and recognised, while at the same time expecting that collective power could establish “control and voice in society for people with disabilities as a social group” (Hammel *et al*, 2008: 1451). Self-determination and empowerment has facilitated improvements in independent living, employment, and so forth for disabled people (Wehmeyer & Palmer, 2003), but living in inclusive communities constructs an environment with more opportunities for disabled people and therefore a greater likelihood for self-determination to occur. Self determination and communities that act inclusively are in a mutually reinforcing relationship (Soresi, 2011).

Case studies: ways of making communities more inclusive for disabled people

The case studies discussed below do not comprise an exhaustive examination of all the work done in communities to make them more inclusive for disabled people. Rather the aim here is to draw from academic literature successful examples of inclusion alongside some of the pitfalls and difficulties involved in establishing good practice, in an attempt to provide a theoretical underpinning for the contemporary examples that will feature in the parallel sets of guidance. Although the attention is more implicit, the examples discussed below provide an alternative set of answers to some of the theoretical questions already raised concerning sameness/difference, where the responsibility for inclusion lies, and power relations within communities. These examples are as useful for the descriptions of the processes involved as much as for the particular outcomes they yield and, as such, could be arranged according to the way inclusion is conceived in each case. Instead they are arranged topically to avoid fixing a link between particular processes and certain types of activity. For example, we should avoid hitching the idea of decision-making to formal political participation precisely because disabled people need to be able to make decisions across all aspects of their lives and their citizenship. This section starts with an examination of inclusive education, in part because this is perhaps the sub-discipline where the most innovative work on inclusion is concentrated. Having established how inclusive education might serve as a model for inclusive communities more broadly, the remainder of this section considers empirical examples found in the academic literature around leisure and social interaction, public roles and access, before drawing some conclusions about the fundamental components of inclusive communities, and how they might be implemented.

Inclusive education as a model for inclusive communities

With some notable exceptions in the fields of inclusive education and inclusive leisure, the academic literature that results from a search on ‘inclusive communities’ is surprisingly lacking, and that which does exist tends towards normativity with scant attention to empirical evidence of replicable good practice with identifiable, measurable outcomes. The issues surrounding inclusive education are vast and certainly exceed the scope of this report, not least because the overall intention here is to examine the relationship between disabled people and DPOs, local communities, and local

government, rather than the specific detail of particular institutional settings such as schools or workplaces which both receive considerable attention in their own right. Still, inclusive education can be a useful starting point for thinking about the pragmatics of inclusive communities. In part this is due to the importance of normalising and inculcating inclusion among young people who tend to be more receptive (Armstrong *et al*, 2011; Deisinger, 2000), and the role that inclusive education can play as part of a wider strategy to promote an inclusive society (Rieser, 2008). However, regarding examples of best practice, the depth of attention to inclusive education has resulted in tested, practical models and toolkits that, in their aim to construct schools as inclusive communities of a sort, might stand as prototypes for inclusive local communities.

The logic of inclusive education involves the application of the social model of disability to the educational context. Therefore inclusive education aims: to alter the educational environment (both physical barriers and inaccessible practices) to make it accessible to disabled people; to change the way disabled people are perceived; and to transform institutions so that policies, practices and procedures are inclusive from the outset (Rieser, 2008: Ch. 3). Inclusive education is well understood to be a different model from segregated education, where disabled children are educated in separate facilities, but the distinction between inclusive and integrated (or ‘mainstream’) education is less well recognised. Integrated and inclusive education both involve disabled and non-disabled children being physically present in the same institutional space, but the essential difference is that inclusive education foregrounds how institutional environments can be adjusted to meet the educational and social needs of disabled and non-disabled children simultaneously.

Therefore, rather than trying to alter children so they can fit into a disabling education system, as happens all too often in integrated education, the underlying principle of inclusive education is that a more flexible system can accommodate everyone. In other words, where children are not fully included in an education system, the system is the problem that needs resolving, not the child. Moreover, by starting from the premise that all children are different, an inclusive education system that works for disabled children can also be more effective for *all* children (Rieser, 2008). All too often, however, a lack of understanding among staff and principals means that lip service is paid to the ideas of inclusive education, but in practice it manifests as minimising disruption and regulating failure (Armstrong *et al*, 2011; Curcic *et al*, 2011). The difference between integration – as presence in an unequal setting – and full inclusion in an equalising environment has been well examined in the context of education, and can therefore provide a useful set of markers for understanding full inclusion in the different context of local communities.

Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD) – the right to an inclusive education – is based on the understanding that inclusive education provides the best educational environment for disabled children, but is also crucial for “breaking down barriers and challenging stereotypes... to create a society that readily accepts

and embraces disability, instead of fearing it. When children with and without disabilities grow up together and learn side by side in the same school, they will develop a greater understanding and respect for each other.” (Rieser, 2008: Ch.1). In other words, an inclusive education environment is about educating all children, whether disabled or non-disabled, as citizens with a foundational understanding of the principles of inclusion, as well as about providing the arena for skill and knowledge development among disabled children in a manner that fulfils their basic human right of equal access to education.

The principle of contact and learning together underpinning greater understanding between groups has been shown in a different context, whereby immigrants and non-immigrants who were part of a programme based on human rights education in the US state of Idaho showed a greater understanding of diversity and long term commitments to inclusiveness (Shaklee *et al*, 2010). However, not any sort of contact will do. According to Deisinger (2000), research has shown that non-disabled people can sometimes change their perception of disabled people through educative methods that elicit empathy or remind people about their value systems, but that interpersonal contact is the most important factor in attitudinal change. Deisinger (2000) describes a community outreach project, ADAPPT, which combined an education programme for people with learning difficulties with training for students in health and mental health related professions. Following Allport’s ‘contact hypothesis’, the key to success of the programme was 1) mutual interdependence, with each group needing the other to achieve their goals; 2) existence of a common goal, with both groups improving knowledge and achieving a personal reward in each others development; 3) equal status, based on the trading of expertise; 4) informal contact, as the group was established informally rather than according to traditional service delivery; 5) multiple contacts; and 6) the group consciously foregrounded social norms of equality. The premise of ADAPPT was that disabled people can be included on equal terms when strengths, capabilities and expertise rather than limitations are the focus (Deisinger, 2000), and this is the underlying principle of inclusive education.

The Index for Inclusion (Booth & Ainscow, 2011) is a tool for inclusive education that is designed to create an inclusive culture (building community and establishing inclusive values), which then guides the production of inclusive policies (developing the school for participation by all and organising support for diversity) and the use of inclusive practices (building inclusion into the things children learn as well as the associated logistical practices). The framework is based on the principles of equality, participation, community, diversity and sustainability, underpinned by the ethic of rights, which result in a set of values. For example, a school in Tower Hamlets established ‘our values’ as contribution, participation, togetherness, feeling valued, compassion, confidence, pride, and engagement (Booth & Ainscow, 2011: 21, 28). These values serve as the basis for producing an inclusive education system that values all school members equally and works towards learning and participation for everyone, through removing barriers and restructuring

practices to facilitate attention to diversity and different sets of needs. Moreover, an inclusive education system improves schools for students, staff, parents and carers, as well as the local community (see Booth & Ainscow, 2011: 11 for a full list of the components of the Index for Inclusion)

Implementing inclusive education in a school requires commitment across various scales, from national and local level policies and practices, to the participation of parents, local DPOs and pupils (Rieser, 2008). Inclusive education can involve a wholesale transformation at the district scale. For example, in the late 1980s, the pioneering London Borough of Newham introduced inclusive education training for teachers and other education professionals, school governors and parents; developed an inclusive early years service; reorganised education funding to ensure adequate support for children, introduce specialist teachers, and create resourced schools for different impairments as a transitional measure; and ensured that all new buildings were fully accessible (Rieser, 2008).

However, even without this sort of system-wide transformation, the inclusion of disabled children can be advanced within individual schools by being conscious of the sorts of things that can act as barriers to inclusion and introducing measures to combat exclusion. Examples of successful measures include establishing friendship schemes, changing seating arrangements to a more informal setting, re-thinking physical education lessons to include those with physical impairments, conducting parallel activities for children with different learning abilities, peer tutoring, planning to make lessons and outings accessible, or using appropriate learning materials and alternative methods of evaluating progress (Rieser, 2008; UNESCO, 2005). Beginning a process of establishing inclusive education can be as simple as consulting disabled children and their families on new measures (Rieser, 2008). In this regard, a particular emphasis on encouraging the participation of disabled children serves to advance inclusiveness precisely because the children themselves best understand the experience of inclusion and exclusion, but also because learning the processes of participation, expressing views and influencing collective decisions are a key element of inclusion in the form of becoming a full citizen (UNICEF, 2007).

In terms of taking forward a model of inclusive education that can be extrapolated for inclusive communities, UNESCO's (2003) model (of inclusive education for all, not just for disabled children), identifies four key elements, which are that inclusion: 1) is an ongoing search for better ways to respond to diversity; 2) requires the identification and removal of barriers with ongoing evaluation and planning for improvement; 3) involves the presence, participation (defined in terms of quality of experience, as determined by the learner), and achievement of all students, with all the associated requirements for the education system being accessible, facilitating and encouraging involvement and having achievable outcomes; and 4) incorporates a moral responsibility to ensure the involvement of all those most at risk of exclusion, marginalisation and under-achievement.

As a framework for broader inclusive communities the UNESCO model contains familiar features, particularly in the form of the removal of physical and social barriers to participation. Conversely, for a model of how *not* to establish inclusion, Rieser's (2008) report is peppered with complaints from disabled young people about the way they are present (integrated) but not able to participate fully – because, for example, science equipment was inaccessible to visually impaired children, or timing other students was considered appropriate participation in PE for some children with physical impairments. Participation for disabled children cannot be tokenistic – they need to experience progress, outcomes and achievements in the same manner as non-disabled children. Where the inclusive education model offers further insight into what inclusion should look like is in relation to successful attitudinal change towards disabled people deriving from contact on equal terms, with mutual goals and interdependencies, and the opportunity for ongoing, informal contact premised on equality as the social norm. Extrapolating from the experience of disabled children, inclusive communities cannot be built on benevolent patronage but on participation as equals based on recognition of the expertise that disabled people can bring, their right to contribute, and their right to self-development.

However, as much as the skills and expertise of disabled people need to be recognised within conventional practices and structures of education, the models of inclusive education also call for transformation in these structures. At one level this is in relation to educative practices. An example is the replacement of a conventional model where a teacher stands at a chalkboard with children in rows of desks, with an environment where multiple people are in the room including support staff and interpreters as necessary, with children working in small groups, undertaking parallel activities where appropriate and so forth (Booth & Ainscow, 2011). The contribution here to a model of inclusive communities is that inclusion and participation of all is the first thought, rather than the afterthought or add on. For our communities to be fully inclusive we might need to abandon longstanding traditions that if adapted might only encourage the presence and integration of disabled people, and radically re-think how our practices could be organised to foster full inclusion.

Beyond transformation of practices, inclusive education also suggests a transformation of the wider ethic of education. Curcic *et al* (2011) suggest that we recognise the 'hidden curriculum' of informal learning built around the moral and civic purposes of education, rather than simply linking a school's reputation to test scores, which establishes a culture of blame towards those students not able to meet specific standards. As Graham & Harwood (2011) note, conventional models of education tend to be concerned with the development of basic skills, or human capital, rather than the broader idea of human flourishing which follows Sen's model of capabilities (discussed above) that recognises how an individual's worth and fulfilment cannot be reduced to a checkbox exercise of skills and economic well-being. Local governments exist within a political economic system which establishes certain obligations that may not always lend themselves well to alternative approaches.

However, the ideas surrounding 'human flourishing' mesh well with some of the models of community development outlined at the start of this section that concentrate on a variety of assets and talents that are often not considered to be contributory. These models recognise how many people are involved in making parallel contributions outside the marketplace in informal economies and care arrangements and so forth, and the extent to which these activities comprise active community participation in ways that might cause us to re-think 1) how these sorts of social networks might be fostered and 2) what we mean by social capital.

Finally, the UNESCO (2003) model calls for inclusive education to be a 'never-ending search' for better ways to respond to diversity, with ongoing evaluation, monitoring and planning, and a moral responsibility for ensuring the participation of those most at risk from inclusion. This call raises the issue of who is responsible for driving toward inclusion, and for making inclusion effective rather than tokenistic. The examples of inclusive education practices given above suggest that one of the easiest ways to establish inclusion is to ask disabled people and their families and support group what they need to be included. As already discussed, this is premised on the notion that disabled people know best what their own needs are but also that, as for all children, disabled children need to be educated about engaging in decision making processes as a pre-cursor to having a public identity. Here, then, inclusive education requires the outcomes to facilitate inclusion of disabled children, but also expects the process to be one centred on inclusion. However in addition, as Rieser (2008) shows, the role of the state can be instrumental in establishing and institutionalising inclusive education as a policy and a set of local and national level practices that set the context for individual schools to implement inclusive education. Therefore, as a model for broader inclusive communities, the idea of the ongoing practice of inclusive education establishes the need for inclusion to be recognised as a continual process rather than a checkbox exercise; for outcomes to be inclusive but also for the process to be inclusive; and for wider society – communities, the state and other institutions that contextualise everyday life – to establish a system that facilitates inclusion, as defined by disabled people.

Recreation and social contact

Community recreation activities are important for developing skills, assisting with physical and mental well-being, and establishing a work/leisure balance, but also for providing opportunities to develop friendships (Schleien *et al*, 2013: 213). For example, minority ethnic and migrant worker groups living in rural communities have used community-based media and the arts to 'tell their stories', break down cultural barriers and build positive relationships and friendships (Carnegie UK, 2009). Research has shown the further positive impacts of leisure for disabled people in terms of stress management, rehabilitation, reintegration, social well-being and greater life satisfaction (Carboneau *et al*, 2013). These benefits have a more or less direct effect on inclusion through what Schleien *et al* (1999) term 'intrinsic' effects, which are those related to the individual as opposed to 'extrinsic' effects that relate to the environment which the disabled person exists within. Inclusive recreation

can combine both intrinsic and extrinsic effects by helping personal development of the individual while also establishing a more inclusive environment in terms of physical, logistical and attitudinal barriers.

As a key part of the process of forming friendships, community recreation can lead to other social activities that all go towards disabled people being active participants in their communities (Chotiner, 2006). Similar to the idea of contact among equals established in the inclusive education model, social inclusion within recreation involves social acceptance and positive interaction in relation to peers. However according to Schleien *et al* (1999), despite often having sufficient opportunity to form friendships, disabled people can have difficulty forming reciprocal relationships resulting in having much smaller social networks than non-disabled people, which acts as a significant barrier to inclusion. This may be in response to exclusion during childhood and adolescence, but also results from attitudinal barriers towards disabled adults (Schleien *et al*, 1999). Organised recreation programmes can help in overcoming exclusion and establishing friendships on the basis of participating in a shared activity. Although inclusion can take the form of individuals accessing existing leisure programmes with appropriate support, according to Schleien *et al* (1999) the most successful programmes involve full inclusion being factored into structured programmes, from the beginning, by recreation leaders.

Project GAIN (Golf: Accessible and Inclusive Networks) is an inclusive golf programme in the USA, funded by the USGA and PGA, and open to all people, whether disabled or non-disabled, as an inclusive recreation programme. The programme is based on social inclusion within a mutually shared activity as the basis for fostering lasting friendships with consequent development of tools and experiences that underpin further active participation in the community, as well as the health benefits of physical exercise (Chotiner, 2006). The programme incorporates a variety of measures to overcome access, programmatic and attitudinal barriers to disabled people's participation. These include making facilities accessible and providing a full range of adaptive equipment; individualising lessons; intensive training for staff to provide appropriate instruction to overcome programmatic and attitudinal barriers; ensuring inclusion and participation exercises are central to the golf lessons to break down social barriers; and involving the community to create acceptance and long term inclusion by normalising inclusive recreation (Chotiner, 2006). Moreover the programme includes intrinsic development for disabled people, in the form of generating confidence through mastering skills, positive feedback to create social confidence, and social awareness gained through vicarious experience of participation and a mentoring component of the programme. Participants report increased confidence and social skills, as well as continued participation within social networks for both golf activity and broader social experiences (Chotiner, 2006).

In a slightly different vein, Barnes and Mercer (2001) consider the role of arts for both the personal development of disabled people and the formation of

broader socio-political consciousness. Engaging in arts can involve the personal experience of exploring what it is like to live with an impairment, as well as having a rehabilitative function (Barnes & Mercer, 2001). For example, Carbonneau *et al* (2013) establish that participation in arts (and leisure pursuits more generally) has helped people with traumatic brain injuries resist the impact of resulting communication and behavioural disorders that limit social participation by enhancing social reintegration, improving communication with family and other associates, and providing a positive identity around new abilities that helps people to adapt to their experience. In another project, young adults with learning disabilities used Photovoice – a method of documentary photography – to articulate their talents, interests and concerns and thus develop their ‘voice’, a crucial skill that is often closed to people with learning disabilities when others speak for them (Schleien *et al*, 2013). Moreover, contributing to the cultural presence of disabled people via disability arts projects develops individual identities but also raises a group consciousness, based on collective positive expression of disability and exposing negative experience of discrimination, which can then lead to wider political engagement (Barnes & Mercer, 2001).

Some of these examples point to ‘intrinsic’ development. Although many disabled people do not have difficulties in relation to self-esteem or social skills, the experience of being excluded from social environments can have detrimental effects that extrinsic solutions alone do not overcome. Thus activities which foreground personal development can be an important element of participation. However, intrinsic and extrinsic solutions are mutually reinforcing and recreation programmes can serve both objectives. In terms of arts as a vehicle for broader social inclusion, participation in exhibitions on equal terms can establish disabled artists as insiders within certain social networks and included in certain socio-cultural spaces (Parr, 2008). Moreover, participation in projects such as arts, which are culturally accepted, re-inscribes disabled people as active citizens, countering the view of dependence and being incapable of productive work (Barnes & Mercer, 2001; Parr, 2008).

There is a fine line here between disabled people engaging in activity that promotes participation and social inclusion that may also have the effect of showcasing how disabled people are the equals of non-disabled people, and disabled people being subjected to normalisation and only judged to be tolerable if we are engaging in ‘acceptable’ activities. This brings us again to the question of who has the power in processes that promote inclusion. Disabled people must retain control over their own involvement and participation, but communities need to play their part by being receptive. In the example of people with learning difficulties using Photovoice to articulate their interests, perceptions and talents, the researchers make clear that people with learning difficulties routinely do not have access to instituting change in the community (Schleien *et al*, 2013). Thus they conclude that “community leaders, recreation practitioners, teachers and citizens must assess the health of their agencies, programmes and activities with

assistance from those individuals who are seen to be underrepresented and marginalised” (Schleien *et al*, 2013: 226).

Public participation – employment and political roles

There is, perhaps, some ambiguity in relation to how far inclusive recreation is actually inclusive. Certainly some of the projects discussed above are concerned more with intrinsic personal development than extrinsic adjustments to address the physical and attitudinal barriers that need to be removed to make environments more receptive to inclusion. The position adopted here is that disabled people, as much as non-disabled people, need and are entitled to the experiences that help them develop as autonomous social beings, but these are most likely to develop in inclusive rather than segregated environments. One of the implicit criticisms of recreation programmes is that, however successful they can be at establishing inclusion, they conventionally comprise non-disabled people ‘creating inclusion’ on behalf of disabled people. By way of an alternative, inclusion in public roles specifically concerns disabled people fulfilling the same sorts of roles that non-disabled people engage in – making a social and economic contribution, and making decisions in their own lives and on behalf of others, and thus forming full public identities.

Employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship are important routes to economic inclusion. However, disabled people are disproportionately likely to work in low paid jobs and experience in-work poverty (Radar, 2010). Being employed improves social networks and physical and mental well-being, especially when career opportunities are available (Perkins *et al*, 2009), and organisations including Disability Rights UK, Lloyds Banking Group and the BBC have implemented career development programmes and networks to increase disabled people’s opportunities to achieve careers, not just jobs. Policy on disability and employment under successive governments has tended to focus on ‘fixing’ individuals, through a succession of employment programmes like Pathways to Work and the Work Programme, rather than re-designing work to ensure full inclusion (Crowther & Sayce, 2013). However there are numerous examples of employers that have re-engineered work procedures in ways that foster inclusion, such as introducing on-going advice and support for line managers in effectively supporting employees with mental health difficulties; designing accessibility into IT systems and management feedback processes from the outset; offering a range of reasonable adjustments; and testing approaches such as annualised hours (so people can work when well) and re-organising roles (Sayce, 2011). For example, Project Search enables people with learning disabilities to fulfil complex, routine tasks with training, which enables them to move from unemployment or very low level jobs like clearing tables into more stimulating roles (see Project Search, nd; Pluss, nd). There is also clear international evidence on the kind of support that enables individuals to work in open employment, in the form of rapid job search in work of the person’s choosing (without preliminary ‘sheltered’ opportunities), with flexible and long-lasting support for both employer and employee where needed (see Sayce, 2011; NDTi 2014).

An inclusive volunteering program in the USA, Building Community Through Inclusive Volunteering (BCITV), provided volunteering opportunities for disabled and non-disabled individuals, aiming to create the same sort of results in relation to personal development and social contact (for disabled and non-disabled volunteers) and attitudinal change (among non-disabled people) shown in relation to inclusive leisure. However, inclusive volunteering also establishes a set of public responsibilities for the volunteers towards the agency they volunteer for and the community where they conduct their work and meet specific needs (Miller *et al*, 2002). In the BCITV example, the volunteers developed and maintained a 'Trail of Peace' at the World Peace Museum in Greensboro, North Carolina. The programme involved inclusive practices similar to those discussed above, such as completing shared tasks towards a common goal with results of skill development, social interaction and improved awareness among non-disabled people. However the programme also introduced to the community the idea of disabled people in positions of authority and responsibility, as well as providing an invaluable service to a volunteer-dependent organisation (Miller *et al*, 2002). There are significant limitations to the volunteering programme however – most notably that the disabled participants did not choose to be involved as it was part of a 'special education' programme for students with cognitive impairments, which obviously undermines the idea of 'volunteering'. This points to the way that the development of new perceptions and expectations of disabled people – as equals – is an ongoing process and not a reality that we have yet achieved.

The question of public identities for disabled people being limited by the perceptions of non-disabled people may be particularly relevant to the experience of people with learning disabilities and cognitive impairments (Anderson & Kress, 2003; Zijlstra & Vlaskamp 2005). However, practices that exclude are commonplace across a range of impairments. Skelton & Valentine (2003) show that the Deaf community are routinely excluded from participation because language provisions are often not made for them. This is particularly problematic within political activity where there is a heavily oral culture. As such, participation and volunteering among Deaf people has tended to take place within the Deaf community rather than in wider society, although the growth of online news, political blogs and so forth mean that disabled people are now increasingly able to access a broader political environment through the internet (Skelton & Valentine). However, although D/deaf people are now able to email their representative, for example, using the internet as a proxy for inclusion in the wider political environment does nothing to challenge exclusion from more localised public and political roles and effectively means D/deaf people can 'pass for hearing' (Skelton & Valentine, 2003). In other words, D/deaf people are still excluded from accessing full information prior to voting and in influencing the political decision making process.

However, there are examples where the political environment is made more inclusive. In Australia, the right to participate in political life as mandated in the UNCRPD has been taken up by the Social Inclusion Board with the result that a conscious effort has been made to include people with learning disabilities

on government disability advisory bodies rather than assume they could be better represented by advocates (Frawley & Bigby, 2011). Research shows that people with learning difficulties tend not to be given adequate support or suitably accessible information, and ultimately do not feel confident to participate (Redley & Weinberg, 2007), with the attitude of other participants in the process and the value they placed on the contribution of people with learning disabilities being a key determinant in the success of the experience (Caldwell *et al*, 2009). A study of people with an intellectual disability serving on disability advisory bodies in Australia endorsed these earlier findings. The study recognised that inadequate support and a sometimes inaccessible environment were consistent barriers to full inclusion, but that there was a marked difference in experience between those who felt respected, valued and listened to and where procedures were established to encourage confidence among disabled participants, and those who experienced tokenism and whose needs were not understood (Frawley & Bigby, 2011). Interestingly, the disabled participants considered their participation to be a right, a status and a duty, and they were well supported through a key role from Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs). Thus the flaw in the arrangement came from the non-disabled members of the advisory bodies not exercising collegiality or recognising the expertise of the disabled participants (Frawley & Bigby, 2011), which re-asserts the importance of the attitudes among wider society in the inclusion process.

Access

It could be argued that the work has been done to secure equal access for disabled people, given that the concept of 'reasonable adjustments' has been enshrined in law. However, as disabled people are all too aware, the right to access has not resulted in seamless 'functional inclusion', according to Schleien *et al*'s (1999) definition, and research across European countries has shown that laws, regulations and conventions do not guarantee implementation or monitoring of barrier-free access (Sendi & Kerbler, 2013). Moreover, while it is now well understood that the principles of universal design are crucial for reducing access barriers and equalising opportunity (Fox and Kwan, 2007), expanding understandings of what is recognised as an access requirement and a reasonable adjustment and the possibilities facilitated by new technologies also mean that questions around access are ongoing.

One example of new technologies at work is a web tool designed to help establish barrier free access in Slovenia (Sendi & Kerbler, 2013). The tool, which maps physical and communication barriers in the built environment, is intended to provide information about accessibility to help disabled people carry out their daily routine, as well as hold to account public bodies and service providers that are failing to comply with legislation and regulations. While the 'bottom-up' logic of the interactive web tool meant that disabled people took part in field investigations for the initial audit and continue to be able to upload new information, the tool retains limitations largely because of the way in which disabled people were involved. The designers defined disability solely in terms of mobility, visual or hearing impairment and limited

the definition of access to compliance with legislation and regulations, meaning that a broader understanding of access was not recognised either in terms of a pan-impairment approach or in relation to access requirements that extend beyond existing legislation. Moreover, there was no discussion about how the web tool, which included colour coding, would be delivered in an accessible format. While disabled people participated in the project, if the designers relinquished some control to disabled people and allowed deeper engagement with the design process, the tool might be more useful for people with a wider set of requirements.

The example of a project to improve communication access undertaken by Scope in Victoria, Australia shows the benefits of this sort of deeper engagement with disabled people. Social barriers can be as disabling as physical barriers and because of societal dependence on speech for making choices, exchanging messages, social interaction, and building a sense of belonging, people with communication impairments can experience social exclusion, marginalisation and victimisation. Moreover, a predominantly oral public and political culture makes it more difficult for people with speech difficulties to advocate for themselves (Johnson *et al*, 2011). The availability of communication aids is an important advance but accessible communication is heavily dependent on the broader community having awareness and an enabling approach towards people with communication impairments (Johnson *et al*, 2011). Scope Australia's Communication Access Network programme tackled communication-based exclusion with a multi-pronged approach that included conducting a communication audit and establishing an access symbol to denote inclusive services and organisations; developing community capacity building projects to tackle attitudinal and practical barriers in accessing libraries, taxis, and leisure facilities, establish incentives for businesses to become communication accessible, and train support staff in inclusive communication; producing accessible information; and supporting individuals by providing personalised communication aids (Johnson *et al*, 2011).

A significant aspect of Scope Australia's Communication Access Network programme is the way in which empowering individuals to be included sits alongside work to establish the community as a more inclusive place. Thus Scope Australia's community capacity building projects are based on forging partnerships and relationships in communities – supporting services, businesses and public bodies as well as individuals and their support networks in order to facilitate inclusive communication. Moreover, while disabled people as a group have the right to inclusive communication, in practice this manifests as particular provision to address distinct needs and requirements in the form of individualised communication aids and support. A key feature of the programme across the range of projects is the participation of disabled people in the process. For example, the criteria for the communication access audit were created in forums of people with communication impairments, who were then also trained to conduct audits. Similarly, Scope Australia's ongoing community capacity building projects are based on the premise that “Integral to all successful projects is the central

involvement of people with speech difficulties. Their role/s are varied including participating in the overarching project group; developing and critiquing resources; educating, informing and shaping the process” (Johnson *et al*, 2011: 96).

The aim to establish engagement on increasingly more equal terms introduces practical answers to theoretical questions already raised about how far inclusion work should be done *by*, rather than done *for*, disabled people. Disabled people were fully engaged in the design and implementation of Scope Australia’s projects, but the breadth of the programme requires an advocate for disabled people with resources and capacity. In this context, Johnson *et al* (2011: 98) point to the example of Change, an organisation led by disabled people where people with learning difficulties co-lead projects to deliver training and produce Accessible Information on equal terms with their non learning disabled colleagues (see <http://www.changepeople.org/about-change/>). If the goal for inclusive communities is full decision-making power for disabled people, Change models how co-production moves a step beyond disabled people being fully engaged in projects to disabled people advocating for themselves, and foregrounds the role of DPOs for establishing truly inclusive communities.

Discussion: reflection on the implications of evidence for Inclusive Communities

For Goldsmith & Burke (2012: 20), there are 8 key elements required for communities to be fully inclusive, which are:

1. Expanding the leadership base
2. Strong strategic social mission
3. Inclusive participation
4. Connecting people through shared recognition of gifts to contribute
5. Easy information including face to face contact
6. Good local navigation and signposting
7. Cross sector work and co-production of opportunities community wide
8. Checking and improvements based on broad definitions of access

Most of these ‘accomplishments’ fit into the classification established by Schleien *et al* (1999) of physical integration, functional inclusion and social inclusion, as exemplified in the model of inclusive education and empirical evidence of inclusive recreation. However, developing leadership capabilities and engaging in co-production go beyond establishing social roles and developing social capital to establishing a public identity in the political and corporate spheres. As well as the expectations for participation and engagement in Schleien *et al*’s model, these public roles incorporate the expectation of decision-making and a broader set of opportunities than social inclusion alone.

Schleien *et al*’s (1999) classification works on the premise that physical integration – or access – is a necessary, but insufficient, pre-cursor to

inclusion. It enables disabled people to be present in environments that historically they have been excluded from, but, on its own, can only provide a tokenistic impression of full social inclusion. Although the idea of promoting 'good relations' between groups is enshrined in equality law and guidance, full social inclusion in the form of friendship, and recognition of equal status in relationships and everyday social interactions is difficult to mandate. Research has shown that direct contact is the most important factor for overcoming prejudice between groups and establishing positive attitudes in general (Abrams, 2010; Paolini *et al*, 2006) as well as moving towards valuing disabled people in particular (Maras & Brown, 2000). However questions remain about how best to increase successful contact. The education model discussed above is established in the context of the inevitably structured environment of a school, but the examples given above of interventions to establish contact between disabled and non-disabled in the fields of recreation and volunteering were also significantly structured. Paolini *et al* (2006) suggest that the fact that contact happens at all is more important than attempting to control for a positive contact experience whereas, conversely, Maras & Brown (2000) found that uncontrolled intergroup contact interventions were unsuccessful in promoting in non-disabled children an attitudinal shift about their disabled peers. Ultimately, ordinary contact through school, college, employment and social organisations has great potential, as long as the contact is on equal terms.

The idea of structured leisure highlights the 'catch-22' of inclusion work. It should not be necessary for another agent to manufacture conditions of social inclusion for disabled people – moreover evidence from the inclusive volunteering project suggested that this sort of interaction did not provide lasting relationships although different results were achieved in the structured golf programme – but without these sorts of intervention it seems that successful social inclusion for some disabled people can be limited. What appears to be an impasse may be resolved by recognising that not *all* disabled people are equally affected by exclusionary processes. Therefore, rather than ceding responsibility to non-disabled people, disabled people who had relatively successfully negotiated exclusion might be key advocates for inclusion of others. Although interests and experiences are far from entirely congruent among disabled people, we are, perhaps, more likely to be more sensitive and knowledgeable advocates for each other, and this implies that there might be a key role for DPOs in encouraging full social inclusion.

Again the larger question is raised here about who is *responsible* for inducing inclusion. Goldsmith & Burke's (2008) 'key elements' include leadership and co-production work, recognising that disabled people can 'do it for themselves'. Moreover, as experts on our own experience, interventions led by disabled people are more likely to be better tailored to suit our own needs. And while there needs to be responsibility within wider society for acting in ways that enable inclusion, it is important to recognise that if inclusion is constructed in ways that involve blaming disabled people for being excluded or demanding 'normalisation' it will, at best, foster ambivalence towards the

concept, as has been found among mental health service users (Hamer *et al*, 2014).

The consequences of different levels of influence and leadership for disabled people is neatly encapsulated in the examples relating to access given above. Disabled people were asked to contribute their ideas about access during formulation of the web tool designed to map accessibility, but the framework for what constituted disability and access needs were already established by the web-tool designers with the consequences that its usefulness was limited. We can understand this sort of practice as *engagement* with disabled people – where we are asked our opinion in a framework already established by non-disabled people with an increased possibility that the outcomes will be not quite right (or, potentially, fundamentally wrong) regardless of best intentions. Alternatively, Scope Australia’s communication accessibility programme shows the value of disabled people *participating* fully, from the beginning, in the design, planning and implementation of a project – meaning that the communication audit, for example, was actually implemented by people who would be using the system. Finally, the example of Change shows disabled people in full *decision-making* roles, valued equally for the unique contribution that they can make to the production of accessible documentation.

Arnstein’s (1969) classic ‘ladder of citizen participation’, is instructive here. Arnstein describes 8 categories of increasing participation and power, which she groups into three super-categories of nonparticipation, tokenism and citizen power. Nonparticipation reflects powerlessness as it takes the form of legitimizing decisions made elsewhere or involving citizens merely to influence their behaviour. Tokenism incorporates an element of legitimate participation, but involves informing, consulting and placating citizens. For Arnstein, tokenism can involve reasonably high levels of involvement but without real power, such as participating in an advisory board where there may be potential for influence, but there is a lack of decision-making power. This perhaps best describes the process of what I have described here as *engagement* – where disabled people are asked their opinion but they have no guarantee that their views will be heard or acted upon, and early input into conceptual frameworks does not take place. The ultimate super-category, citizen power, describes true citizen participation, because it involves power-sharing or fully devolved power. This is where the activities I have described as *participation* and *decision-making* lie, because here disabled people share or hold some level of authority and control over outcomes. Despite being subject to some criticism, Arnstein’s model is helpful because, as well as describing the different impacts of varying levels of power, it also foregrounds the ways in which activities labelled as participation can actually be practices of legitimation (Painter, 2005). In other words, apparently inclusionary activity can be rendered tokenism if it is not developed in inclusionary ways. This is exemplified by the different experiences of disabled people on governing bodies in Australia, where the attitudes and behaviours of other participants determined whether disabled participants were taken seriously as equals or undermined.

What Arnstein describes is different levels of involvement in the decision-making process, and these are important for a number of reasons. Disabled people have as much right as anyone else to be involved in decision-making, and it is simply a matter of equality that we are included in decision-making processes across a range of matters. More importantly though, disabled people have expert knowledge about disability and as such need to be included in decision-making both in relation to matters that are conventionally understood to concern disability and in broader matters such as planning, education, recreation and so forth that can quickly become exclusionary if input from disabled people is not sought. What is at stake here is whether both processes and outcomes are inclusive and, while it might be technically possible for an inclusive outcome – such as an accessible park – to be developed without input from disabled people, successfully inclusive outcomes are far more likely to derive from fully inclusive processes as the access examples show. Succinctly, the greater the degree of involvement by disabled people in decision making processes the more likely there are to be outcomes that are inclusive for disabled people.

These discussions centring on the improved effectiveness generated by including disabled people raise the matter of how inclusion and advocacy intersect. The idea that disabled people can ‘do it for ourselves’ has been a strong and much-needed message from the disability movement and yet there are times, particularly in relation to large projects, when work needs to be done by organisations with capacity, institutional trust and leverage. Disability advocates – such as the example of Scope Australia – can be very effective, but Disabled People’s Organisations (DPOs) can comprise this sort of efficacy alongside the added advantage of the experience-based expertise that derives from being led by disabled people. Both the theoretical and the empirical cases have been made in this report for DPOs to act as places of nurture for disabled people – as spaces of support and for skill and knowledge development. In this regard, some of the evidence in the case studies that was presented as inclusion work could more realistically be described as intrinsic development – improvement of confidence and social skills for example. And while it is important that disabled people have access to this sort of development just as non-disabled people do, it does not describe inclusive practice *per se*. But this is what DPOs do every day and it is a vital role. However, underpinned by being places of friendship and personal development, DPOs also act as spaces for developing public and political identities, which can be important for individual roles and articulation of particular needs as well as for fomenting a strong collective identity for disabled people. Fraser (2009) asserts the importance of a space for representation to resolve issues of maldistribution and misrecognition. In this context DPOs can serve both as the space for collective deliberation among disabled people and then as the agent for wider representation in the community and with public bodies.

The sort of articulations facilitated by DPOs are crucial as the basis for underpinning the broader local solidarities that are the stuff of inclusive, active communities. Moreover, as Towell (2014) notes, while establishing effective,

inclusive civic partnership is important in its own right, it is also an important element of co-production, the mechanism designed to ensure effective and inclusive planning and delivery of local government services. Co-production ensures users' voices are heard across the phases of commissioning, from establishing what is required, through planning and procuring services, to their eventual delivery and evaluation (nef, 2014). However the ideal of co-production is subject to the differing levels of involvement, power and influence established in Arnstein's ladder of participation, and thus to the potential pitfalls of tokenism and inadequate engagement (see Slay & Penny, 2014 and Williams, 2014 for in-depth examinations from both sides of the co-production relationship of the measures to be undertaken to ensure genuine co-production rather than tokenism). While securing genuine co-production requires an openness from local governments to deploy expertise developed through direct experience, it also demands the building of that capacity within local organisations. In other words, the sort of engagement with local disabled people demanded by effective co-production involves considerable work for DPOs, but a constant refrain in both the theoretical work and empirical examples discussed above is the extent to which there is inadequate resourcing for both project work and to provide expert consultancy.

According to the nef report (Slay & Penny, 2014) one of the key objectives of co-production is 'well-being', which implies a broader outcome than the idea of service provision alone. At one level this chimes with Simon Duffy's (2013) argument that the increased focus on competition, construction of engagement between local government and DPOs simply as commissioning, privatisation of some Centres for Independent Living (CILs) and reduction of social value to economic measurements has led to disabled people being simply understood as service users and ULOs as commissioning agents rather than CILs as deeply embedded parts of the community that engage in a range of activities around peer support and social networks. Duffy (2013) makes a number of suggestions to revert engagement, including commissioning, to a format that develops community by supporting genuine inclusion. However the idea of well-being, and Duffy's appeal to re-centre community *in* the community and its needs, also speaks to the ideas of the transformative approach discussed above in relation to Sen's approach to capabilities.

For Sen (1985, 1999), well-being is measured in relation to people's capacities to fulfil the lives they choose rather than in relation to the standardised economic metric of income, and Crowther (2008) uses this work to show that disabled people can be active citizens if they are supported to live the lives they choose based on their talents, rather than cast as necessarily dependent people with deficiencies. The inclusive education model gives practical examples of how this sort of understanding could be incorporated, and how it demands a transformative approach to how education is conceived. In turn, then, this might suggest that a transformative approach to the role of disabled people and DPOs in the community could re-focus attention towards the support needs of disabled people to develop their capabilities, rather than focusing on the economic imperative in ways that

undermine the objective of real inclusion. As such, social quality, discussed at the beginning of this section in relation to how the collective identity of the community relies on the self-realisation of its members (Phillips, 2003) might be the watchword, rather than social capital.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This report has shown that conventionally taken-for-granted ideas like community and inclusion are open to re-examination, and that this is a useful starting place for thinking about how inclusive communities might be produced and practiced. 'Community' is traditionally invoked to refer to local communities or neighbourhoods, and that definition followed for the Inclusive Communities project where the term is applied specifically in reference to the relationships between local governments and the community they serve, as defined by formal territorial boundaries. However, 'community' is, in fact, an unfixed referent. People are embedded in multiple territorial communities and everyday experience can derive as much from the work place, sub-local relationships with immediate neighbours, engagement with national policy or global economic processes, or interactions in virtual networks as from local community membership. Moreover, 'community' can also denote membership in a 'community of identity' such as the 'disabled community', although this is complicated by the fact that a single signifier cannot reflect the difference within communities of identity, particularly given that people hold multiple, overlapping affiliations based on race, gender, religion, ethnicity and so forth, as well as differences of political commitment and, simply, of opinion. In practice, then, both local government and the local population they serve are constituted through extra-local processes, which inflect the relationships between them that emerge as 'the community'. These relationships are characterised by points of unity, dissent, agreement, and varying degrees of action, which change over time. This project foregrounded the intersection of territorial and identity based communities in order to examine how disabled people can fit into these relationships in more inclusionary ways.

This definition of community is characterised by a flexibility that presents a challenge to local governments as they attempt to negotiate the now familiar localism and community empowerment agenda. Part of the current form of local community development involves fostering social capital, which can be understood as the networks built between people through social interaction that encourage shared values, allegiance to the community and civic participation. However, some have noted how disabled people are routinely marginalised in the everyday processes of interaction in which social capital is constituted. Without the broader social transformation towards inclusion of disabled people, modes of community empowerment such as building social capital will simply serve to reify existing exclusions and inequalities. In this context, some have argued that we need to return to the apparently cohesive characteristics of pre-industrial communities to build strong, active, contemporary communities. Others suggest that privileging cohesion and unity can impose a homogeneity which, in fact, undermines the principle of a strong community, as the interests of some are not heard or served, leading to exclusion, partial representation, dissent among the excluded and a broader threat to democratic principles. Rather than set up an inevitable impasse between strong or diverse communities, we need a more nuanced understanding of identity, difference, inclusion and community to underpin the idea of strong communities as diverse communities.

Standard ways of understanding exclusion use an economic definition based on worklessness that fails to explain the link between disability and poverty, let alone the broader exclusionary processes experienced by disabled people. Fraser's (1997) description of maldistribution and misrecognition provides a better explanation for the mutually reinforcing experience of economic and socio-cultural marginalisation and exclusion experienced by some disabled people. Following this expanded version of exclusion, citizenship is a useful concept for addressing both the inclusion of disabled people and the creation of strong and active communities, simultaneously. Citizenship comprises both a set of rights that challenge maldistribution and misrecognition by reproducing people as full citizens and the concepts of contribution and participation, recognised in shorthand as 'duties' although theorists disagree on whether these should be understood as obligations specifically tied to the rights of citizenship.

The advent of the welfare state drew attention to the distinction between social (including economic) citizenship, and the longer standing political and civil forms of citizenship. Following the rights and duties model, social citizenship provides rights to education, health and economic welfare which ensure socio-economic reproduction but also enable the citizen to act as a worker, a consumer, and a full participant in family and wider social life. Political citizenship provides the right to exercise political power, which can take the form of voting or standing for office but also involves the right to be engaged in public life and to develop as a political being. Equal access to political participation is crucial for fulfilling democratic principles, but more immediate community benefits of full political citizenship for disabled people appear in the form of an increase in the numbers and range of people participating in public life, as engaged citizens and as decision makers and political leaders.

Disabled people may need extra, tailored provisions, beyond the range of support given to all citizens, to overcome the barriers to full inclusion and enable us to contribute to our full capacity. However it is important to contextualise this need for extra support in the wide range of provisions and different forms of public infrastructure which are applied or used selectively. There are many and diverse state provisions, in health, education, employment, and the built environment, for example, that are used selectively (such as maternity leave, the state pension, job centres or motorways) but produce wider benefits to society because of the way they support individuals. Understood in this context, state support for disabled people is simply the same sort of social reproduction that is extended to all citizens.

The right to have the support necessary to exercise social and political rights derives from the idea of justice that accompanies the equal moral worth of citizens but, in most cases, it also underpins the capacity to make a contribution or, as Jenny Morris (2005) put it, the 'right to have duties'. This right to have duties turns on the recognition of disabled people as full citizens or, in other words, as in possession of civil citizenship. Civil citizenship

comprises the rights necessary for individual freedoms, including liberty of the person, freedom to enter into contracts, freedom of speech, and justice, the latter being distinctive in that it underpins the right to assert all other rights as equals before the law. In more conventional language, it is civil citizenship that provides disabled people with the rights to equality, recognition and self-determination.

Whereas social and political citizenship essentially underpin inclusionary outcomes, civil citizenship is particularly concerned with equality of process such that disabled people need to have the same rights in terms of decision-making power and consultation that non-disabled people might expect. These rights can manifest differently in different circumstances. Therefore, full *decision-making power*, or choice and control, would be expected in terms of determining personal matters such as health or social care, whereas full *participation*, with the opportunity to set the agenda, might sometime be appropriate for decisions that directly affect disabled people (following the principle of ‘nothing about us without us’). In fact, although it is not a focus of this project, disabled people hold the same rights as all citizens to engage in broader public matters, which should be attended to if a full range of perspectives is to be brought to bear on general local decision-making processes. *Engagement*, or the right to be consulted, may sometimes be appropriate, but we need to guard against engagement as a tokenistic, watered down version of participation that only really yields legitimation for the real decision-makers, where limited choice effectively means no choice at all.

Returning to the idea of creating strong communities as diverse communities, it is these freedoms to enter into agreement and co-operative arrangements as equal citizens that can serve as the basis for establishing solidarity and allegiance across differences, with consequent advances in generating social capital and promoting civic engagement within local communities. To achieve the bases for this solidarity requires an attitudinal shift among the general population, where this has not already occurred, to accept all disabled people as full citizens, capable of decision-making and engagement. But in some cases it also requires capacity building among disabled people to offset the experience of broader sentiment that denies the existence of such capacities.

Traditional ideas about community development require investment in human capacity but this has been shown to work to exclude some, including disabled people. Some alternative models of community development focus on the approach and the support requirements necessary for developing individual capabilities, concentrating on social quality as the basis for developing contributions rather than social capital *per se*. For disabled people this sort of recognition demands inclusion beyond legal compliance for physical access and reasonable adjustments. Rather, full social inclusion in terms of recognition as equals is required for an individual to have full autonomy over decisions in relation to their private existence and identity, as well as to enable the public roles they may adopt that form participation in and contribution to society. These sorts of equal roles for disabled people present a responsibility for wider society to facilitate inclusion, without seizing control

of what that inclusion might look like and risking assimilation in the form of normalisation, which does nothing to foster genuine equality and inclusion.

Although perhaps not open to unqualified extrapolation, inclusive education offers a model for establishing wider inclusive communities, starting from its premise that 'integrated' education does not constitute inclusion and proceeding to show how, if a flexible education environment is created, disabled children can be fully included in a way that also serves the interests of non-disabled children. Beyond the value of the education itself, the benefit here is that contact on equal terms, with interdependence and mutual goals is standardised among disabled children. The institutional adjustment necessary for inclusive education also serves as a model, because of the ways in which new sets of values and flexibility can be established within a single institution, but is more powerful when embedded in the multi-scaled state system. These new ways of thinking involve both revaluing the skills, talents and capabilities of disabled children, but also recognising that institutional practices and structures need re-orientating in inclusive ways as well.

There are difficulties in transposing the education model onto the broader social world not least because children, whether disabled or non-disabled, are in unequal relationships with decision-makers in the form of teachers and administrators. As such, when applied to structured, inclusive recreation programmes, while the goal of contact is addressed, there is variability in the extent to which disabled people are in control of their experiences. The distinction is clear in comparison with the experience of participating in public bodies, which are shown to be successful when adequate support is given but only if non-disabled people are open to inclusion. In terms of different levels of decision-making, contrasting examples of developing accessible environments showed how the best examples of inclusive outcomes result from inclusive processes when disabled people have full decision-making power.

Outside the structure of the inclusive education environment, for disabled people, DPOs often work as the place where the community of identity intersects with the local community. DPOs can serve as the space for nurturing public identities among disabled people, serving the broader project of inclusive communities in two ways. First, they build up the pool of disabled people with skills for political and civic engagement and leadership, gained through exercising a public identity. In fact, engaging within the environment of a DPO involves adopting a public role and making a political contribution in itself. Second, via this process of engagement, DPOs have become established centres of expertise that can contribute to the broader public debate about matters that affect disabled people and, crucially, inform decision-making processes within local government via co-production. The reality of local communities is that they no longer present a single coherent identity and set of interests, if they ever did. Disabled people and DPOs have a key role to play in establishing inclusive communities, but need the appropriate support and the recognition to be able to exercise this role.

The idea of the possibility of transformation has run through this report. The suggestion that community should be developed from the grassroots meshes with the idea of active citizenship involving a 'bottom-up' reworking of community engagement rather than the top-down notion of imposed responsibilities. In this context, alternative models of community development suggest that we should look first to community members to establish their talents and interests as the basis of contributions – following Sen we might describe this in terms of recognising 'capabilities' – rather than imposing a particular version of what participation in the community should look like. It might appear more precarious to local governments to work from an assumption of flexibility, but re-thinking ideas like social capital in terms of social quality – where all people are supported to maximise their potential rather than approximate as best they can conforming to a fixed model of community involvement – might help develop participation among all community members, not just disabled people. Here, one significant possibility for future investigation is examining how disabled people come together with other traditionally excluded groups and individuals in ways that promote strong communities alongside self-realisation for individuals.

In sum, the evidence presented here establishes some broad themes for contextualising the examination of inclusion work currently underway in local communities. These are: 1) inclusive communities bring local rewards in terms of political and economic development as well as re-valuing individuals; 2) recognising diversity makes local communities strong because it maximises the possibility for participation and solidarity across difference; 3) maldistribution and misrecognition excludes disabled people both physically and socially; 4) an inclusive community is one where all people can participate socially, economically and politically, and disabled people need appropriate levels of support to ensure that participation is possible; 5) 'presence' is not sufficient to ensure the participation of disabled people, full inclusion involves disabled people having decision-making power and participation with some degree of authority and certainty that our voices will be heard; and 6) there are significant implications for the role of DPOs that by acting as places of nurture for disabled people also become places of expertise that can facilitate inclusion through co-production and other forms of co-operation with local public bodies and other groups within their communities. Inclusion is an ongoing process; we have seen some progress but there is still much to do. The aim of this report is to offer an interjection that promotes new ways of thinking about inclusive communities.

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