



inlude.org



Breaking down barriers
for people with communication needs



The Include Project - Registered Charity No: 1177785

inlude.org

Contents

	Page
Our Mission	4
Inclusive Communication	5
Our Bigger Picture	6
Key Activities	7
Our Support	8
The cost of not caring	9-10
How do others describe Include	11
How do we create change?	12-16
Impact for Individuals	17
Choir Member, Sai's Story	18
What is our wider community impact?	19
Beneficiary Ripple Effect	20
Our COVID-19 Response	21-24
Our Future Plans	25
Why we need your help	26
Get Involved	27
Stay connected and get in touch	28

Our Mission

Include is a charity on a mission to break down barriers for people with communication needs – this includes people with learning disabilities, autism, dementia or acquired brain injury.

Our vision is a world with:

- 1. Significantly better life chances for people with communication needs.**
- 2. Rapidly improved community awareness and knowledge.**
- 3. Changes in public policy to reduce barriers to inclusion.**

Making this happen means training and supporting health and social care staff, businesses, families and communities to use inclusive communication techniques such as Makaton, and providing empowering platforms for people who communicate differently to be heard.

Include brings people who have understanding and speaking difficulties together with the wider community to reduce isolation and develop shared understanding.



Everything in Life depends on Successful Communication

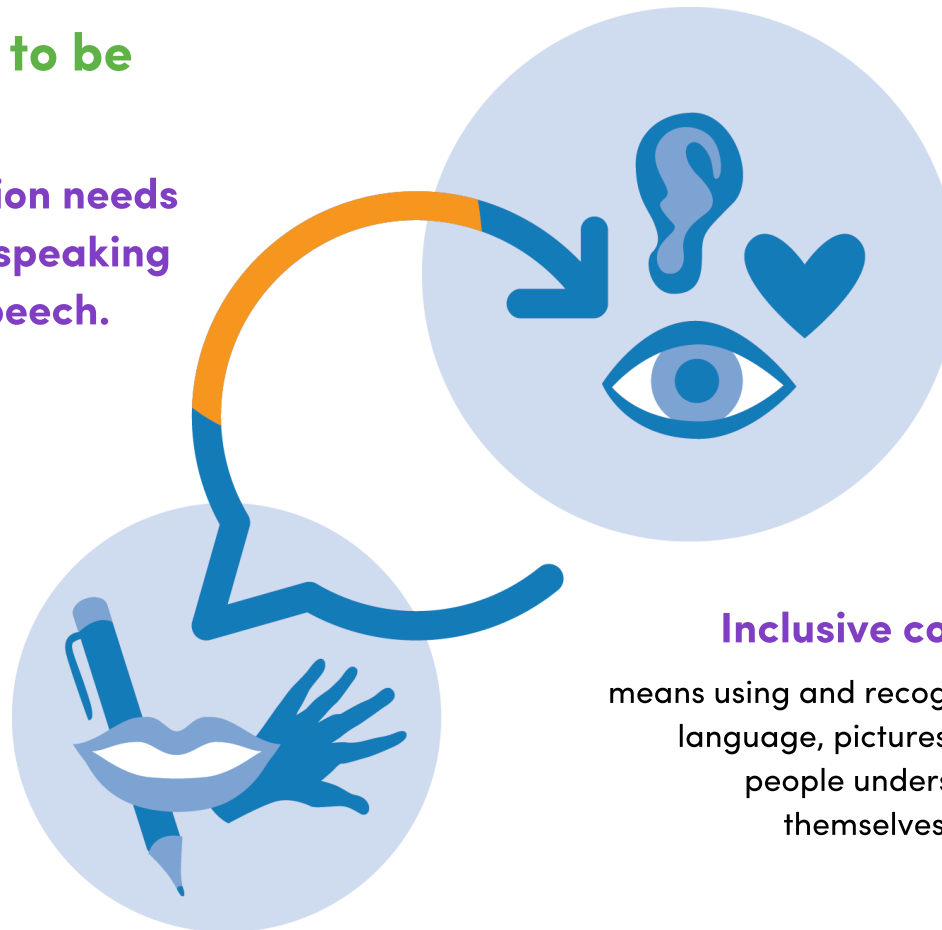
Successful Communication is a **two way process**

A message needs to be given - and it needs to be understood

People with communication needs may have difficulty with speaking and/or understanding speech.

So for communication to be successful - people need communication partners who will support them to understand or express themselves.

This is **inclusive communication**



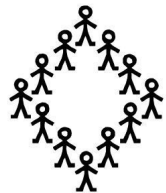
Inclusive communication

means using and recognising signs, body language, pictures - whatever helps people understand and express themselves - not only speech

Our Bigger Picture

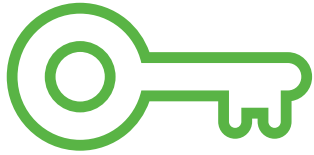
Include cares deeply about people facing communication difficulties, their families and those who work with them.

We know the best way to have profound impact and expedite change is to forge links across the community, public and private sectors.



Community and friends





Key activities:

- **Amplifying the visibility and voice** of people with learning disabilities and/or autism through co-production, co-delivery of training, supported volunteering and self-advocacy.
- **Delivering accredited training in inclusive communication methods** and raising awareness of the Mental Capacity Act across the community as well as specifically in the Social Care and Health Care sectors.
- **Providing inclusive activities and communication opportunities** for people with and without disabilities to unite. For example, using music as a tool to promote learning, build confidence and form friendships.

Our Support

Include provides formal and informal training and activities using the most up-to-date evidence and the expertise of the people who experience communication challenges daily.

We all use Inclusive Communication at different times. As well as speech, we might use

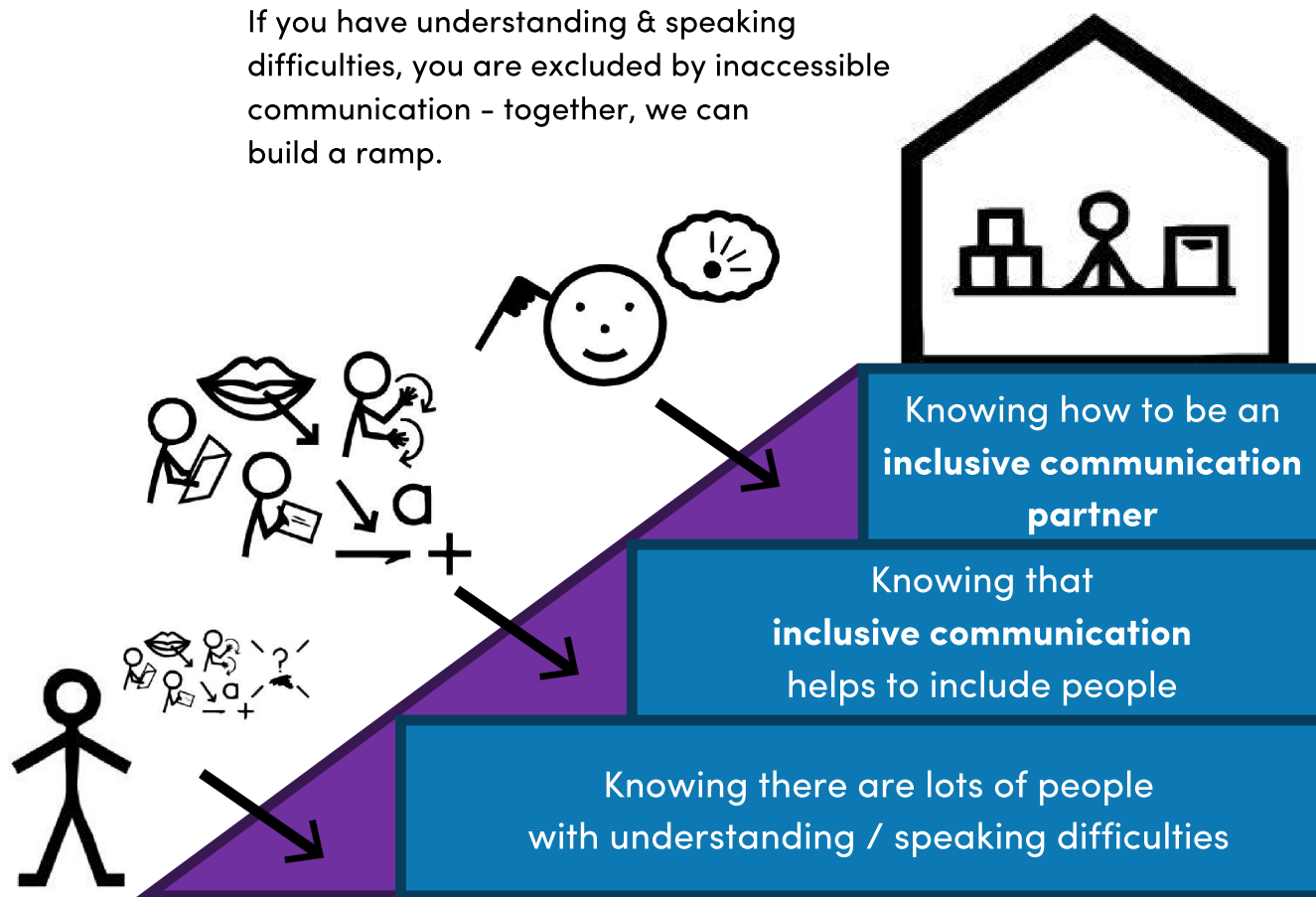
- facial expressions
- gestures
- signs
- pictures
- pen & paper
- easier language
- objects and more.



The Communication Access Ramp

If you use a wheelchair, steps exclude you. Society accepts the need for a ramp to grant access.

If you have understanding & speaking difficulties, you are excluded by inaccessible communication - together, we can build a ramp.



The cost of not caring – why you should support Include.

Not caring about inclusive communication affects millions of people in the UK:

20% of the UK's population,

up to 14 million people, will experience **communication difficulties** in their lifetime (RCSLT 2019).

It can happen at any time, to anyone.

What is kind communication?

Include Choir member Jay says; “Our Kind Communication song reminds people not to judge a person on first impressions, but rather talk to them, make time for them and try to understand them” – “The song reminds people not to talk to the person behind or next to someone – talk to the disabled person directly, otherwise it is not fair” adds Sarah.

Being able to express yourself and be understood is fundamental to safety and wellbeing.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, **people with a learning disability** are

6 times more likely to die from COVID

than the general population. Lack of access to inclusive information and trouble communicating has been recognised as contributing to this increased vulnerability (The Learning Disability Mortality Review, LeDeR report, Nov 2020).

Even before COVID-19, people with a learning disability faced serious health inequalities and had a significantly lower life expectancy –

**with women dying on average 27 years younger
and men dying 22 years younger**

(LeDeR report, 2019).

1200 people

with a learning disability **die avoidably** every year (Mencap, 2020). This can be due to difficulties asking for help or explaining medical symptoms, or being unable to flag abuse or neglect.

Around 1 in 7 (14.3%)

disabled people aged 16 to 59 years in England and Wales **experienced domestic abuse** in the last 12 months, compared with about 1 in 20 (5.1%) non-disabled people (ONS 2020).

The cost of not caring - why you should support Include.

Life's **day to day essentials can be difficult** if you struggle with understanding and speaking.

It can be **hard to build friendships**, join leisure activities, find a job, use shops, engage with technology or access services if there is no support.

More than half of disabled people surveyed by Sense reported **feeling lonely**, rising to **over 77% for those aged 18-34**. Loneliness is associated with physical and mental health problems, contributing to a poorer quality of life (Sense, 2017).

The proportion of disabled people (13.9%) aged 16 years and over in England, who **reported feeling lonely "often or always"** was almost four times that of **non-disabled people** (3.8%) (Office for National Statistics, March 2019).

An active social life can help people with a learning disability feel happier, included and valued. Positive friendships **reduce loneliness** and **improve physical health**. (Wilson et al, 2017).

On a day-to-day basis, Include helps people combat some of these issues. Reaching out across the community (in person and virtually) to a diverse range of people, with and without disabilities, we teach ways to include, break down barriers and facilitate community cohesion. Deeper than that, we inspire kindness and friendship, and build lasting confidence.

A survey of our members found that

95% said being part of **Include helps them feel happy and make new friends,**

and

87.5% said **Include makes them feel more able to speak up for themselves.**

"This choir is a lifeline to those who have communication issues (sometimes coupled with other special needs) – a lifeline during a pandemic as well as in 'normal times'."

Chairman, Bletchingly Community Choir

How do others describe Include?

“Include was set up in 2016 by speech and language therapist Alix Lewer, who understands the complex speech, language and communication challenges that people with learning disabilities experience. She also has a comprehensive grasp of the impact severe communication difficulties can have on inclusion in society.

Alix’s knowledge and network of passionate volunteers design and provide a variety of activities made as accessible as possible for people with learning disabilities. Demand is high – especially during this pandemic when many vulnerable people have been isolated and excluded further.

Include uses a wide range of alternative and augmentative communication in a natural and non – patronising way. This ensures that ALL people accessing Include can understand and participate using preferred communication methods. A wide variety of service users access Include, and the diverse range of communication strategies ensure that there is scope for adults with learning disabilities to gain confidence with using peer support skills.”

Professor Celia Harding,
Division of Language and Communication
City, University of London



How do we create change?

1

We involve members in the running of the charity through our Steering Group, co-production and delivery of training and songs - and through supported volunteering roles.

This provides an enhanced sense of purpose, self-advocacy and belonging.



"I'm not just a singer and member, I challenged myself to be a Choir Rep – an organiser and helper for the choir, which I've done in lockdown too"
Hannah, Choir Member and Rep

"The Include Choir makes me feel special because I'm very involved. I help a lot at meetings and rehearsals and keep the choir to time!"
Josh, Choir Member

2

We host weekly pastoral, music and communication activity sessions for our members.

This provides friendship, community and teaches inclusive communication methods.



Help

"It feels like 'losing my voice' when I couldn't attend the Include Choir. At choir I feel heard. I missed the opportunity to feel listened to and understood...during coronavirus...the choir is a place members can come to spend time with other supportive people."

Jay, Choir Member and Ambassador



3



Music

We work with social care providers to deliver **interactive music and communication sessions** for those they care for and the support workers.

This **builds relationships**, provides a **fun inclusive activity** and **demonstrates inclusive communication**, **developing staff skills** and **confidence**.



"It is physically and mentally beneficial to all those involved. The staff enjoy the sessions as much as the people we support, they learn and laugh all together."

Active Living - supported living provider

"When we sing and perform, we are one. There is no ability or disability. There is no "staff" and "client". Each member has a vital role within the group and each member makes an equal contribution."

**James,
Support Worker**

4

We provide **training, consultancy and speech & language therapy services** to people with communication needs, health and social care staff, businesses, charities and education providers.

This improves access to inclusive communication.



"It's no secret that The Include Choir does wonders for their members. But as a resource for support workers to learn about inclusivity, communication, and learning disability rights, it is hugely overlooked. I have learned new ways of communication that I would never have thought of using before, and I've seen them actually work."

Danni, Support Worker



5

We speak at **events and conferences**, **contribute to academic research and lobby** with and on behalf of those who we work with.

This **raises awareness** of understanding and speaking difficulties.



"The Include talk was eye opening and very well presented. I learned how important it will be to check clients have understood the advice I give"

Citizens Advice Staff

6

We coproduce training with members as well as providing **accredited training in Makaton and Talking Mats**.

This empowers members with communication needs and **improves inclusive communication skills** for health and social care staff, businesses, charities and education providers.



Teaching



inclusive communication

"Learning to sign Makaton has increased the ability to communicate with those who use non-verbal communications"

Active Support: Supported Living Provider

7



We run
The Include Choir
which combines
creativity, music,
Makaton and laughter
with clinical expertise.

This inclusive activity
provides friendship
and community.



Sing

"Include provides a variety
of services for people with
learning disabilities. One of
the main features has been
the choir which is active in
the local community (and
now online). It provides an
important social landmark
in the week for many
service users, encouraging
interaction and friendship."

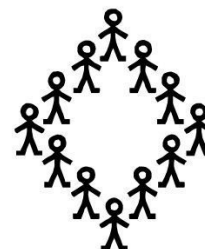
Professor Celia Harding

8



We actively seek members
from right across society –
with and without
understanding and
speaking difficulties.

Through integration comes
appreciation and
celebration of difference.



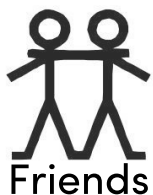
Community

"The Include Choir is good
for broadening people's
horizons, and extending their
social circles. And it is
important for people with
learning disabilities and
people without learning
disabilities to form
friendships and learn respect
for each other as this creates
a better community. The
Include Choir helps people to
do this."

MaryClare, Choir Member

9

We celebrate Star of The Month with a certificate and member's birthdays with a song (and ideally eat cake too!) so every individual feels special and celebrated among friends.



Friends



"We still celebrate people's birthdays and sing Happy Birthday to them. I would feel quite down if we didn't have Include in lockdown. I am not too bad at the moment as I can go to work – but the choir has kept me going before."

Sarah, Choir Member and Ambassador

10

We support and train volunteers to really join in and work with everyone in Include.

This enhances our community and widens the network of people with an awareness of inclusive communication.



Volunteer



"It enriches the lives of local people: services users and their carers, people who volunteer with Include and the people who experience joy and happiness from coming into contact with the service."

Yvonne Parish, Reigate and Banstead Council

"When the volunteers like me and support workers sing with the choir members, it makes everyone feel equal and together"

Sofia, Volunteer

Impact for individuals



Help us to keep the sun shining.

Choir Member, Sai's Story:

Sai was one of our loved choir members who sadly passed away in 2019, his brother Saran remembers the importance of Include to Sai.

"When my younger brother, Sai was here, he faced some challenges but with the support of friends and family he was able to face them with a smile on his face. One of those friendship groups that made a huge and sustained change in his life is the Include Choir.

Sai was looking for an activity which was fun, musical and a place where he could feel part of a wider community. I was fortunate enough to stumble across the Include Choir in my search and Sai absolutely loved it there.



It is a choir where he could sing his heart out and play the drums but where everyone could participate no matter the musical talent and always feel included!

It was definitely an activity he looked forward to every week, a place where he made many friends and a place where he truly felt he belonged."

The Include family is so grateful to have known Sai and been part of his life. Fellow choir member Beth said; "Sai's cheerfulness and participation was truly a ray of sunshine and inspirational." And support worker James said; "He made a positive impact on all those he met. He will be remembered dearly as someone who made a difference."

Sai is missed but regularly remembered and a 'Sunshine Award' has been established in his memory. It goes to people who bring support and sunshine to The Include Choir.

What is our wider community impact?



Training participants learn inclusive communication tools and skills.



More social support staff, health care workers and other relevant professionals can communicate effectively with those who have understanding and communication difficulties.



This reduces frustration, improves accessibility of services and improves quality of life for those needing support.



More people are aware of inclusive communication needs and Mental Capacity Act related rights.

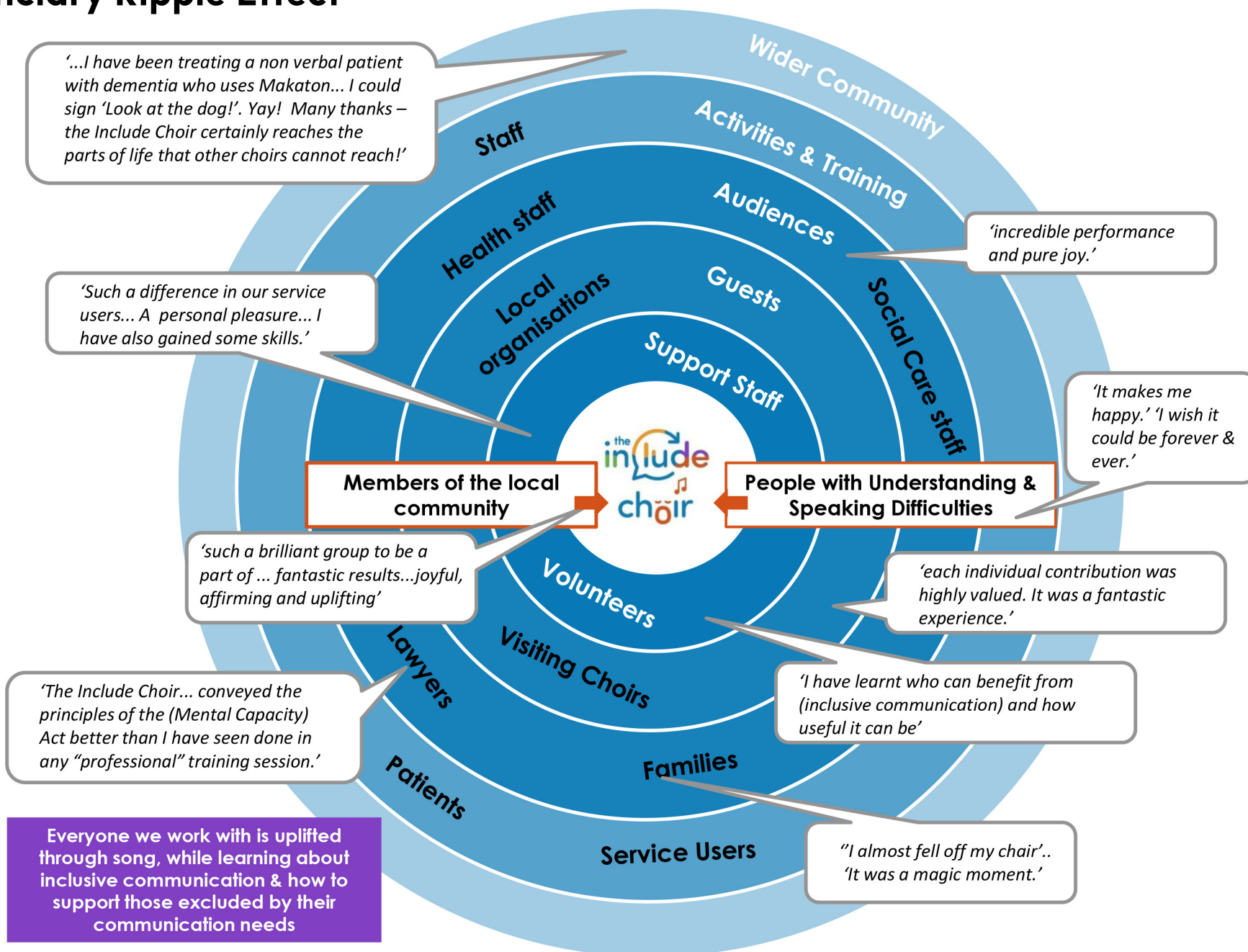


We contribute towards a more inclusive and welcoming world for people with understanding and speaking difficulties.

Include works closely with organisations such as **Reigate and Banstead Council** who fund some choir sessions and contribute funding towards our business development manager's salary:

“We choose to work with Include because their activities support the strategic goals of Reigate and Banstead Council, including by providing targeted and proactive support for our most vulnerable residents and by providing leisure, cultural and wellbeing services that are accessible to, and meet the needs of, communities and visitors. Include enriches the lives of local people, services users and their carers, people who volunteer with Include and the people who experience joy and happiness from coming into contact with the service. It creates and sustains a ‘family’ feel to the organisation.”

Beneficiary Ripple Effect



Our COVID-19 Response

In March 2020 we rapidly adjusted our services in light of the pandemic. We quickly took weekly choir rehearsals online and members continued to join in and ask for more.

We always knew we were more than just a choir – but the pandemic made that clear. There was need to provide a safe space to discuss anxieties and worries around the pandemic and also to provide pastoral support to those experiencing increased isolation.

We launched weekly online video calls to support our members and trained volunteers to facilitate these in a safe, engaging and inclusive way.

Our weekly sessions have been an important source of joy, community and friendship through lockdown living and shielding.



“As service users have been unable to physically meet up, the online choir has provided an important lifeline for service users unable to go out or continue many of their daily activities. The choir has been essential in giving support, reducing distress and reducing isolation.

The integration of information about COVID into accessible formats that highlight good daily health management for the service users has been astounding and of high quality. Include provides dynamic support for people with learning disabilities using integrated communication methods to ensure ALL are included.”

Professor Celia Harding

Our COVID-19 Response

95%

of our members have made
new friends at **The Include Choir**.



Our face-to-face training and consultancy work with the NHS and social care providers moved online where possible. We have developed online training packages to respond to the increasing need for inclusive communication training including on the Mental Capacity Act.

COVID-19 has impacted Include's members but also has had a financial impact on the organisation as many fundraising opportunities, including our performances and paid-for training contracts, have been lost.

We will continue to listen to what our members need and proactively find ways to deliver our essential work to support them, no matter what the future twists and turns of the pandemic may be.

Our COVID-19 Response

Reach

2019-20

80 local Include Choir members



2020-21

Over

300

online FB
Choir members



Services

2019-20

46 Include Choir Sessions



2020-21

311

singing, self advocacy,
mindfulness, craft and
communication sessions



Our COVID-19 Response

Staff

2019-20

3 part time staff 

2020-21

9 part time staff 

Training

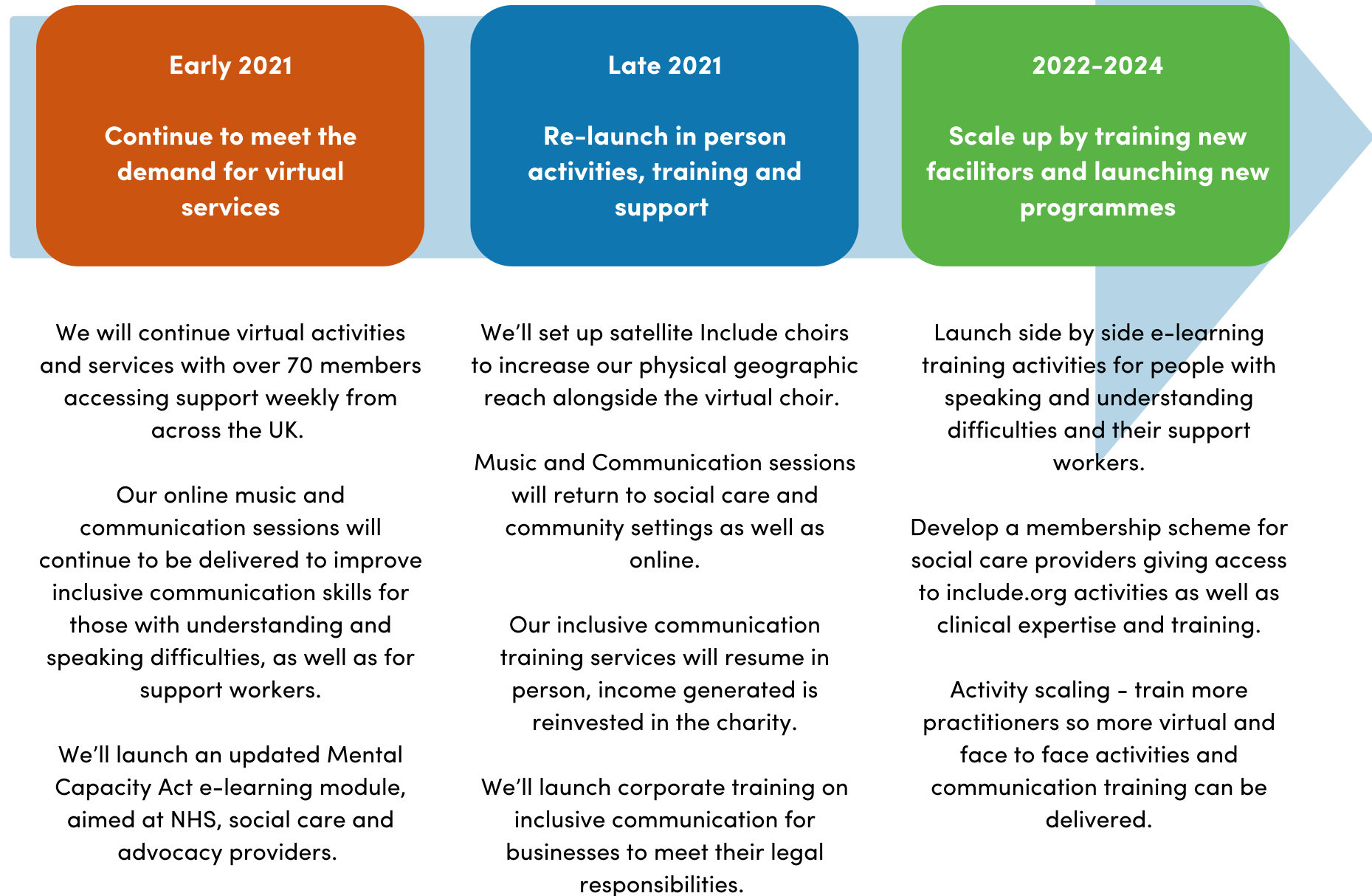
2019-20

15 trained volunteers 

2020-21

50 trained volunteers 

Our Future Plans:



We simply can't do this without you.

Every donation makes an enormous difference to our members.

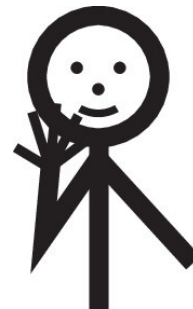
£25 could pay for communication iPad apps to give members a voice.

£75 could run one inclusive music and communication session online.

£100 could pay for a musician, and Speech and Language therapist to run an Include choir rehearsal.

£550 could train 8 volunteers in Level 1 Makaton signing.

£2000 could develop one inclusive communication online learning module.



Thankyou for your help



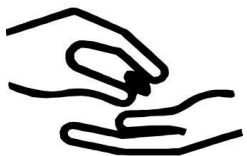
Donate

<https://include.org/donate>

Get Involved:

Through giving

- Give monthly either by direct debit or via Payroll Giving
- Donate in celebration of a loved one
- Organise a Fundraising event or taking on a challenge
- Support us through Trust and Foundation grants



Give

Through volunteering

- Support our members
- Advocate for us in your organisation and community
- Help us at events or with our online communications
- Share your expertise to support our organisation's growth and development



Volunteer

Through your workplace

- Ask your employer to host inclusive communication training
- Advocate for those with understanding and communication difficulties
- Nominate us as your workplace's charity of the year
- Sponsor one of our programmes, events or services



At work

Stay connected and get in touch



www.include.org



www.youtube.com/TheIncludeChoir



www.facebook.com/IncludeChoir



www.twitter.com/IncludeOrg



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/include-org/>



www.instagram.com/includechoir

Donate

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